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Germanic Literature and Culture
A SERIES OF MONOGRAPHS
EDITED BY JULIUS GOEBEL, PH.D.
PROFESSOR OF GERMANIC LANGUAGES IN THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

MILTON AND JAKOB BOEHME

A STUDY OF GERMAN MYSTICISM IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND

BY

MARGARET LEWIS BAILEY, PH.D.

Sometime Fellow at the University of Illinois

NEW YORK
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
AMERICAN BRANCH: 35 WEST 32ND STREET
LONDON, TORONTO, MELBOURNE, AND BOMBAY
HUMPHREY MILFORD
1914

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

THE present study is the first of a series of monographs on Germanic literature and culture. As the title indicates, the plan of the series does not limit its scope to German literature, but includes also the literatures and civilizations of the peoples of kindred origin.

While literature is usually considered the most perfect expression of national genius, it is, after all, but a portion of that full, pulsating life of a people which manifests itself in the entirety of their civilization. To understand literature one must take into account not only the resolves and innermost strivings of the intellectual leaders of the time, but also the immediate and permanent effect of their work upon the life of the people. Nowhere does the close relationship between literature and culture present itself more clearly than in the great intellectual movements which weave, like the Earth Spirit in Faust, the living garment of Teutonic civilization. The present monograph is an attempt to trace one of these mighty though little noticed movements, which, starting in Germany during the seventeenth century, subsequently, by devious ways, returns to its source.

The science of literature should strive to comprehend and appreciate human life both present and past. Moreover, a general and live appreciation of literature is essential to progress in higher civilization. Or, as Carlyle has it, "to apprehend the beauty of poetry clearly and wholly to acquire and maintain a sense and heart that sees and worships it, is the perfection of all human culture."

America's joint heritage of English and German culture

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would seem to make this country a particularly suitable one in which to study sympathetically and broadly, but without national bias, English and German literature in their multiple and complex relations. Certainly it is in this field of comparative literature that American scholarship may hope to develop independence and originality.

J. G.

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PREFACE

THE following pages contain the dissertation offered for the doctorate at the University of Illinois in June, 1912, and the results of the work accomplished under the Illinois Traveling Research Fellowship, 1912-1913.

Through a study of the part played by Gottfried Arnold's *Kirchen- und Ketzerhistorie* in Goethe's intellectual life, my interest in mysticism and the Neoplatonic movement was aroused. I found that in the mysticism of Goethe I was considering only one slight manifestation of a tremendous world-power reaching far into all the spiritual realms open to the mind and heart of man. The conclusion seemed forced upon me, however, that the grave importance of the relation of the Neoplatonic movement to literature had been decidedly overlooked in our literary histories, both English and German. Especially did it seem incomprehensible that a mystic who had such ardent admirers and so pronounced a following as did Jakob Boehme, from the time of the first appearance of his writings down to the new edition that is even now being published, should have had practically no accredited influence on the literary life that mirrored the great spiritual movements rising about the time of his activity.

During my work in England, I found that the relationship of mysticism and literature had not been so unnoted as I had thought. I found Miss Spurgeon's illuminating chapter on "Law and the Mystics" in the *Cambridge History of English Literature* (chap. xii, vol. ix), published in the autumn of 1912. Miss Spurgeon herself called my atten-

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tion to her *Mysticism in English Literature* just as it was appearing in the spring of 1913, for which I wish here to thank her, as also for several very kindly suggestions. In the main, however, the growing interest in mysticism seems, as in the *Studies of Mystical Religion* by Rufus M. Jones, 1909, and *Mysticism* by Evelyn Underhill, 1910, to be along lines of religion, psychology, and history, rather than of literature. A systematic treatment of the connection between literature, and Neoplatonism as a carrier of mystical thought, has not yet been made. It seems not too bold a statement to make that we have here a most remarkable instance of an international and intellectual relationship, an eminently worthy subject for the study of comparative literature.

The suggestion of a relationship between Milton and Boehme was made by Dr. Julius Goebel. To his unfailing inspiration and guidance I owe what results these pages have to show.

The method I have tried to follow has little in common with the old method of careful and detailed comparison of the works of each author for possible resemblances, although some such comparison must of course be used as a checking up of any other method; it is rather an attempt to lay hold of the spirit of the time that produced natures so sympathetic and complementary as those of the simple, uneducated Görlitz shoemaker and the cultured man of the world, friend of a rising republic. This method may best be characterized in the words of Dilthey: "It is the comparative method," he says, "through which the positive, the historical, the distinctly individual, in short, the individuation itself becomes the object of scientific research. Even the scientific determination of the single historical event can be completed only through the method of comparison on the basis

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of universal history. One phenomenon explains another; taken all together, all phenomena explain each individual. Since the far-reaching results arrived at by Winckelmann, Schiller, and the romanticists, this method has continually gained in fruitfulness. It is a scientific procedure that was developed from the comparative methods of philology, and then transferred to the study of mythology. It follows logically that every systematic mental science must, in the course of its development, sooner or later, arrive at dependence upon this same comparative method."

In the course of my studies in England, I was greatly indebted to courtesies extended by officials of the British Museum, Dr. Williams's Library (London), the Bodleian Library, the libraries of Queen's, Christ Church, Worcester, and Manchester Colleges of the University of Oxford, the collections of Magdalene, Trinity, and Peterhouse of the University of Cambridge, and the Library of the University of Cambridge. Particularly, I wish to thank Champlin Burrage, M.A., B.Litt., librarian of Manchester College, Oxford, for many valuable suggestions and Dr. Frederick W. C. Lieder of Harvard University for his kind assistance in reading proofs.

M. L. B.

January, 1914.

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
	EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION	iii
	PREFACE	v
I.	INTRODUCTION	1
II.	ENGLISH MYSTICISM BEFORE BOEHME . .	31
III.	BOEHME IN ENGLAND	57
IV.	MILTON AND BOEHME	115
V.	SIMILARITY BETWEEN MILTON AND BOEHME IN RELIGIOUS, PHILOSOPHICAL, AND POLITICAL IDEAS	137
VI.	ROMANTICISM	170
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	183
	INDEX	195

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I

INTRODUCTION

To speak of the sources or influence of any mystical writer or movement seems paradoxical indeed, in view of the absolute independence and separateness of every individual mystical experience. Yet a certain relationship is clearly discernible among the exponents of purely personal religion; their tradition, though not of forms and ceremonies, not bounded by the ordinary material facts of religious life, is nevertheless a tradition. They are not isolated phenomena, but are related to one another. The truths that they express can never age nor die. Each mystic, original though he be, receives much from the past; each, by his personal experience, enriches the heritage and hands it on to the future. Thus the names of the great mystics are connected, and around them may be grouped historical facts of religious progress.

But the history of the period of greatest religious changes in England, the time of the great religious revival of the seventeenth century, when mysticism was most dominant and powerful there, is not a history mainly of a few tremendous personalities extending to the spiritual sphere man's conquest over his universe, but rather a history of an epoch when certain great spiritual ideas, certain far-reaching mystical truths, struggled for expression in every realm of human activity. It is a history, not so much of great mystics, as of very many mystically-minded men and women. It deals with a mystical atmosphere which many

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diverse elements united in producing, expressed by a very general experience of religion in its enthusiastic form, and running the gamut of experience from pure mystical ecstasy to a belief in magic, from regenerating faith in the Inner Light, through alchemy, Rosicrucianism, apocalyptic prophecy and other aberrations of the spiritual sense.

The form of this mysticism is, like that of the most of Christian Europe, the Neoplatonism of which Plotinus was the greatest exponent. But Neoplatonism as a whole, and the mysticism which used its language, must not be identified with one another. We find pure mysticism, it is true, in seventeenth-century England. But we also find a widespread revival of Neoplatonism.

Many inconsistent elements united to form the semi-religious philosophy that goes by the name of Neoplatonism. Plotinus (A.D. 205-*c.* 270), Egyptian by birth, studied in Alexandria at a time when that city was the center of the intellectual world. He was a determined opponent of Christianity. The form of his thought is an advanced Platonic idealism, combined with the conception of emanation from the Hermetic philosophy, with elements from the Mysteries and from oriental cults, but the real inspiration came from his own deep mystical experience of ecstatic union with "the One." From the age of forty he taught in Rome, surrounded by eager adherents. Appearing at the moment in which the wreck of paganism was complete, but before Christianity had conquered the educated world, his system made a strong appeal to the spiritually-minded, and also to those whose hearts thirsted for the mysterious and the occult. In his teaching of the existence of an Absolute God, the "Unconditioned One," not external to anyone, but present in all things, he appealed directly to the mystical instincts of men, and to those living at the time of the

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greatest popularity of his system it came as a ready means of expressing their own vision of Truth. Hence early European mysticism, Christian and pagan alike, is Neoplatonic.

The influence of Plotinus upon later Christian mysticism was enormous, though mainly indirect, through the writings of his spiritual descendants, Proclus (412-*c.* 490), the last of the pagan philosophers, St. Augustine (354-430), and Dionysius the Areopagite, that unknown writer of the early sixth century, probably a Syrian monk, who chose to ascribe his priceless little tracts on mystical theology to Dionysius, the friend of St. Paul. Through these men the powerful genius of Plotinus nourished the spiritual intuitions of men and possessed, even into the seventeenth century, a final authority like that of the Bible or the great church fathers. The works of Dionysius were translated from Greek into Latin, about 850, by the great Irish philosopher and theologian, John Scotus Erigena, one of the scholars of Charlemagne's court. In this form they widely influenced later medieval mysticism.

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the tradition was carried on by the first great French mystic, St. Bernard (1091-1153) the Abbot of Clairvaux, and by the Scotch or Irish Richard of St. Victor at Paris; in Italy by St. Bonaventura (1121-1274) and Thomas Aquinas (1226-1274), all close students of Dionysius.[1]

Under the influence of St. Bernard, Richard of St. Victor, and St. Bonaventura, the torch was lighted in England by Richard Rolle of Hampole (*c.* 1300-1349) and the short but brilliant procession of English mystics began. Rolle, educated at Oxford, and widely read in mystical theology, became a hermit in order to live the mystic life to which he

[1] See Evelyn Underhill: *Mysticism*, pp. 541-62, for historical sketch of European mysticism.

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felt himself called. His writings already show the practical temper destined to be characteristic of the English school; his interest is not philosophy, but spiritual life. Similar devotional treatises of practical instruction for the inner life are the works of Walter Hilton (died 1396), and of the unknown author of *The Cloud of Unknowing,* who produced also the first English translation of Dionysius, *Dionise Hid Divinite,* and the beautiful *Revelations of Love* of Julian Norwich (1343-*c.* 1413), with their devotional exposition of the mystical steps of purification, contemplation, and ecstatic union. From Julian to the seventeenth century there is practically no English representative of mystical thought. Spenser's Hymns (1596) would seem to carry on the tradition, but they are Platonic rather than mystical and curiously informed with the spirit of Puritanism.

In Germany, the spirit of Plotinus lived in the mystical genius of Meister Eckhart and his two most famous disciples, Tauler and Suso. All three were Dominican friars, all devout followers of St. Augustine and Dionysius, St. Bernard and Aquinas; all lived and worked in or near the valley of the Rhine. Yet the contrast between the three is very striking. Eckhart (1260-1329) was like St. Augustine and Thomas Aquinas in that he was so strong, intellectually, that his mystical power is in danger of being obscured. He laid at once the foundation of German philosophy and of German mysticism. His pupil John Tauler (*c.* 1300-1361), friar-preacher of Strassburg, a man of great theological learning and mystical genius of a high order, was a born missionary, living only in his labor to awaken men to a knowledge of their transcendental heritage. His breadth of humanity was equaled only by his depth of spirituality. Heinrich Suso (*c.* 1300-1365), famous neither for his metaphysi-

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cal nor for his humanistic qualities, was a subjective, romantic mystic, deeply concerned with his own soul and his personal relation to God. His autobiography seems impelled less by a desire to impart his doctrine to other men than by the essentially human impulse to leave a record of an intimate personal adventure.

With these three men were associated less known personalities, members of the great informal mystical society of the Friends of God, which sprang into being in Strassburg and worked courageously for the regeneration of the people in a time of corrupt and disordered religious life. From one of these unknown workers came the literary jewel of the movement, the beautiful little treatise known as the *Theologia Germanica,* "one of the most successful of many attempts to make mystical principles available for common men."

Directly following these men and drawing their intellectual vigor from the genius of Eckhart, were the Flemish mystics John Ruysbroeck (1293-1381), in whose works the metaphysical and personal aspects of mystical truths attain their highest expression, and Thomas à Kempis (1380-1471), called "another Dionysius, clear where the Areopagite is obscure," author of the exquisite *Imitation of Christ* (written 1400-1425). Through Kaspar von Schwenkfeld (1489-1561) the teachings of Eckhart and Tauler reached the people at a time when the fashion of sect formation and the branding of heretics was nearing its height. Through Sebastian Franck (1499-1542) the philosophical basis of those same teachings was assured.

So far, we have been dealing only with the mysticism that has come down to us in the language and traditions of Neoplatonism. Several great mystics have been omitted from our list; they were of such a thoroughly original and spon-

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taneous character that they owed absolutely nothing to the formative influence of the writings of their predecessors. Other men, generally spoken of as mystics, have likewise been omitted, because in reality they belong to quite a different side of Neoplatonism. Like Porphyry (233-304), they inherited only the philosophy of Plotinus. Thus it came about that two different views of life are represented by Neoplatonism, views radically different, yet often so similar that they seem to merge, for they often use the same language, instruments, and methods. These two views represent the two great human activities corresponding to the two eternal, elemental passions of the self, the desire for love and the desire for knowledge, the hunger of the heart and the hunger of the intellect for absolute truth.

The hunger of the heart is expressed by mysticism,—not an opinion nor a philosophy, not a pursuit of the occult and the hidden, but first-hand experience and knowledge of the ultimate reality underlying all appearance. "It is the name of that organic process which involves the perfect consummation of the Love of God; the achievement here and now of the immortal heritage of man, the art of establishing his conscious relationship with the Absolute," [1]—in other words, the experience of Plotinus, Dionysius, Tauler, and the rest.

For that other type of character in which the desire for knowledge dominates, the goal of ultimate truth means likewise a knowledge of the supersensible world, but here it is a knowledge that must change into control. To this the early centuries gave the name of magic.[2] In this the intense

[1] Evelyn Underhill: *Mysticism*, p. 97.

[2] One must bear in mind that the word "magic" as now generally used has quite lost its original flavor and connotation; love-philters and conjuring tricks have no relation to the serious and reverent attempts of bygone centuries to come into possession of a part of the power of the Infinite.

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human craving for hidden knowledge and for power, the deep interest in the occult, the mysterious, finds a place. It is the intellectual, aggressive, and scientific temperament seeking to extend its field of consciousness until it shall include the supersensual world. It is the quest for a power that may control the whole universe. Under this view, a line of Neoplatonic thought progressed that culminated a few centuries ago in what we now call modern science. Organized religion, in its forms and ceremonies, must always show traces of this magic; modern therapeutic measures demanding faith in a healer or a heightened power of the will are everyday expressions of the same fundamental conception; and all of the sciences owe their birth to this magical way of regarding the relation of man to his universe.

This intellectual interest in Neoplatonism, as opposed to the mystical intuition of it, had also its great exponents. Its period of influence begins with the founding in Florence of a Neoplatonic academy. Under the patronage of Cosimo de Medici (1389-1464), Marsilius Ficinus (1433-1499) made masterly translations of Plato and of Plotinus and various other Neoplatonists. He interpreted Plato entirely according to the spirit of Plotinus and consciously attempted to bring their philosophy into accord with Christian doctrine. Ficinus taught that the divinity of the soul was assured by its immeasurable power to will and to know; fostered and uplifted by religion and philosophy, the soul should ascend the heights of knowledge even to the summit of divinity itself, and part of the way thereto might well be learned from those elements of Plotinus's teachings that were of Egyptian origin, from the writings of Hermes Trismegistos, father of magic. It was in this atmosphere of intellectual progress of the academy that the great artists of the Renaissance lived and worked. Although later the academy fell

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under the displeasure of the church, its influence continued increasingly.

Pico de Mirandola (1463-1494) dedicated his life to the dissemination of these principles. Following his belief that they came originally, in part at least, from the Orient, he made a study of oriental languages, and to the teachings of Plotinus and Hermes added the kindred ones of the Kabalah.

This was the first introduction to the Christian world of the cabalistic writings, that collection of supposedly ancient Jewish tradition committed to writing some time in the second century of our era. Here again we meet the doctrines, familiar to us from Neoplatonism, of the emanation of the soul from God, of the essential harmony of all things, of the archetypal world of which our world is a copy,—doctrines that lie at the foundation of the belief in magic, the belief in a spiritual alchemy powerful to effect great changes beneficial to the life of man. Significant for the progress of these ideas was the German humanist who came under the influence of the academy at Florence and returned home to carry on in his own country the mission of Pico de Mirandola. This was Johann Reuchlin (1455-1522), with his writings on the Kabalah and the cabalistic art.

In its beginnings, magic appears as the office, or art and science of priests; closely related to the art of healing it was naturally considered the receptacle of hidden wisdom, the knowledge of higher, of supernatural powers, such as spirits sometimes possess and sometimes communicate to the favored of mankind who know how to come into harmony with the forces of the universe. But this borrowing of power might arise from either a good or an evil purpose, just as spirits themselves are either angels or devils, servants of light or servants of darkness. Hence the distinction

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between white and black magic that Mirandola felt constrained to make. "One of the chief complaints against me," he says in his *Apology*,[1] "is that I am a magician. But have I not myself differentiated a two-fold magic? One sort which founds itself entirely upon the help and co-operation of evil spirits and most decidedly deserves aversion and punishment, and the other sort, magic in its true sense. The former subjects man to evil spirits, the latter makes him their conqueror; the former should be called neither an art nor a science; the latter embraces the deepest secrets, the investigation and knowledge of all nature and her powers. In assembling and calling forth the powers spread by God throughout the universe, true magic performs no miracles but rather comes to the assistance of Nature in her activities; it investigates the relations or sympathies of all things, it applies to each thing a most powerful attraction and thus draws from the deep and secret treasure chamber of the world wonders usually hid from mortal view, just as if it were of itself the originator of them. Religion teaches us the contemplation of divine wonders; as we learn to know natural magic aright, we are still more compelled to say: full are the heavens, full is the earth of the majesty of Thy Glory!"

But the powers of nature and of man that were the legitimate object of the researches of science, that is, of "white magic," had been throughout the centuries a profound mystery, a matter of faith and foreboding, and whoever sought to learn anything of them, sought also to keep his acquirements secret, or to share them only with the initiated. Some men purposely shrouded their knowledge in obscurity in order to appear the greater and wiser, expressing in

[1] Quoted on p. 85, Carriere: *Die philosophische Weltanschauung der Reformationszeit.*

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symbols that which they themselves understood only partially, hiding what remained hidden from them because their insight and experience of laws and relationships was incomplete. Thus there arose a tradition of knowledge and powers that never existed, and the shady side of magic, charlatanism of every kind, conscious or unconscious, was protected. The philosopher's stone, originally the symbol of that power beneficent to mankind to be achieved through union with the divine world-power, came more and more to mean merely the means of transmutation of baser metals into gold. The belief in astrology, in witchcraft, in every kind of divination and prophecy flourished.

Against this degradation of the Neoplatonic tradition, Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim (1487-1535) labored, especially in his last and ripest work, *De occulta philosophia,* which is directed toward establishing the principles of true magic against the superstitions of his time. But like the other learned men of his time, he believed in the possibility of the material philosopher's stone, the goal of the great medieval alchemists, Raimundus Lullus in Spain, Arnoldus Villanovanus in France, Albertus Magnus and Basilius Valentinus in Germany, Bernhard de Trevigo in Italy, and Roger Bacon in England.

The man who gave new impetus and a new direction to these chemical experiments was Theophrastus Paracelsus von Hohenheim (1493-1541). In his life and writings some have seen so much that is wild and fantastic that they reject him as a mad charlatan, while others find so many splendid observations and discoveries by which the science of later times has profited, that they praise him as a purely scientific reformer, much in advance of his age; both forget, however, how thoroughly his own life, adventurous yet heroic, represents the manifold contradictory character of the life

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of his time, full of inspired beginnings, yet easily running into fanaticism. Paracelsus was greatest as physician, the servant and helper of nature, great also as philosopher and chemist. His medical system was founded upon philosophy, alchemy, and astronomy. In the Bible and the Kabalah he found the key to all secrets. He acknowledged the unity and harmony of all being, for God is the foundation in which all things, in their archetype, exist; he taught the power of the imagination in strengthening the will. For him the philosopher's stone signified a reformed and regenerated world. The alchemistic hope of making gold from baser metals is one of the delusions of pretenders against which his writings sounded a constant warning.

The warnings of Paracelsus were generally misunderstood by his followers, but his spirit of scientific progress finally found a congenial home in Johann Baptista van Helmont (1577-1644). Here the mystical and magical spirits met, for Helmont had been deeply inspired by the writings of Thomas à Kempis. A nobleman by birth, he very early gave up position and property to follow Christ; to be of utmost help in the world, he studied medicine and thus came under the influence of Paracelsus's writings with which he allied himself in teaching and investigation. In one important thing, however, he differed from his earthly master—in his belief in a philosopher's stone by which quicksilver could be changed to gold. His son, Mercurius van Helmont, we shall meet later in England.

All of these many demands for truth and knowledge, for first-hand experience in religion and science alike, were to Luther the helpful contribution of the ages in his struggle against the power of tradition. But with Luther, especially in his later life, the influence of mysticism was far from final. He became at once the conqueror and the conquered;

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although he freed the church from the old yoke of tradition, circumstances compelled him to subject it at the same time to the new yoke of the interpretation of the Gospel. The need of inner freedom for mankind had not yet been satisfied.

To that end the work of Kaspar von Schwenkfeld (1489-1561) was directed. Inspired by Tauler's sermons he eagerly welcomed Luther's work of reform. But Luther's ideas failed to keep pace with Schwenkfeld's, and the two men became absolutely estranged. The followers of Schwenkfeld in Würtemberg and in Silesia finally formed a separate sect leading very devout, retired lives. In the seventeenth century they merged with the Boehmenists. Schwenkfeld taught that Christ gave to the divine likeness, hidden within mankind since the beginning, a clear manifestation; that the Bible or external word bears witness to the inner word, Christ, the Spirit of God, within each human heart; and that the essence of true belief and faith is consciousness of the Christ within.

Doctrines similar to these were held by Sebastian Franck (1499-1542), who sought to give to them an assured philosophical basis from the principles of Neoplatonism. As humanist, theologian, and historian, he was himself an epitome of the different elements of the reformation epoch in its teachings of freedom in every realm. Exile and persecution for heretical opinions in no way lessened his demand for religious toleration, even for papists, Jews, and Turks, or made him less steadfast in his witness for the "inner light."

This spirit of mystical theology we find also in the works of Johann Arndt (1555-1621), who enjoyed the unusual reputation of completing the work of Luther and of being a heretic as well. From his pastorate in Badeborn in Anhalt,

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he was dismissed, 1590, for objecting to Calvinistic innovations in the Lutheran church; 1618, he was denounced as a heretic by Lutheran church officials.[1] His work on *True Christianity*[2] was a popular treatise like Thomas à Kempis's *Imitation of Christ,* upon which, with the addition of the sermons of Tauler and the *Theologia Germanica,* it is founded. Arndt made no pretense of formulating a system of theological doctrine; he hoped merely to give rules for active, genuine Christian life at a time when the Lutheran church was overburdened with the letter rather than the spirit of the law. The highest good of life is a feeling of the beauty of God. There are three steps to its attainment: repentance, enlightenment, union with God through love. True freedom results from an utter denial of self, the giving up of will and all desire. The preached and written word of God has authority but no more than faith, the outgrowth of the inborn " inner light."

Another supporter of mystical Christianity against the dead religious life of his time was known in Valentin Weigel (1533-1588), and particularly after his writings were published and spread broadcast in 1612. Weigel had studied Platonic philosophy according to the Neoplatonic interpretation of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, also the writings of Dionysius and Erigena. In him there was a union of the two traditions of the search for truth; to his study of the older mystics and to their teachings as transmitted by Schwenkfeld and Sebastian Franck, he added the study of natural sciences, astrology, alchemy, and magic, from the works of Agrippa and Paracelsus, both of whom were, as we have seen, indebted to the Jewish Kabalah. It is thus the reconciliation of a two-fold philosophy that we find ex-

[1] Arnold: *Kirchen- und Ketzerhistorie,* II, p. 115.
[2] Book I published 1605; that, with three others, 1610.

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pressed in Weigel's system: all facts of life are to be learned either through ardent study of the "book of nature" or through the light of faith in a "still Sabbath," that is, in the absolute tranquillity of soul in which God speaks to men; a union of these two sources of wisdom discloses all secrets. Since man is the microcosm, a knowledge of self is the key to the knowledge of the world. The reality of all knowledge is in the observer or subject; the object is only the exciting cause of knowledge. But God is both subject and object, and since there is, inborn within us all, the spirit or "inner light" from Him, we can know Him and all things as well. Weigel taught that sin is any attempt to accomplish anything without God; that ceremonies, good perhaps as reminders of God, are in themselves useless. He believed in the universal priesthood of man, and that God's prophets are simple people, not the highly educated. False prophets are those who preach the righteousness of war, or who denounce as heretics any with beliefs differing from their own. By no means has church or state any right to persecute for conscience' sake. It was on account of his agreement with these heterodox views that Arndt was called a "Weigelianer" and driven from his church.

The similarity of Weigel's teachings and those of the Anabaptists is very striking; they practiced his theoretical demands for moral and political reform. The freedom that Luther had demanded in the spiritual realm, Karlstadt and Münzer and their followers were demanding in the social and political realm. Karlstadt rejected the sacraments, teaching that faith itself is a power of God through which He speaks directly to the soul; by realizing itself, the soul knows God. Münzer was a devout student of Tauler, also

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deeply affected by the prevailing belief in the immediately approaching millennium.

We cannot here go into the history of the extravagances and final destruction of many Anabaptists, as the followers of these men were generally called from their insistence upon adult rather than infant baptism. Failing as a social and political force, the movement lived on as a form of religious belief, which, founded wholly on inspiration as it was, naturally gave rise to many sects. Once started, inspiration could not be controlled. In the main, however, according to one of their orthodox opponents,[1] the various sects agreed to the following doctrines: they rely upon inner illumination, believing that God dwells bodily within them; reject the preaching of the word of God and disregard the final authority of the Scriptures; believe in "calmest tranquillity" and ecstasy, in the manifestation of God in dreams and visions and in nature; reject the doctrine of the Trinity, the work of the Holy Ghost in men through the sacraments, the need of an atonement through Christ; and teach the three-fold nature of man,—body, soul, and spirit.

In other writings of the time more even than in those of Arndt and Weigel, we find expressed this general feeling of the age, widespread among Protestant theologians and men of culture and education, that the Protestant reformation had failed.[2] Why is it, they asked, if Protestantism is progressing toward the goal set for it by the devout founders, why is it that men are becoming less devout, less moral in public and private life, less cultured even? Why is it that instead of one pope there have arisen in Germany many small popes? These men complained of a theology con-

[1] Colberg: *Das Platonisch-Hermetische Christentum*, I, pp. 332-34.

[2] Opel: *Valentin Weigel*, p. 283.

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cerned mainly with doctrinal controversy, of a literature not remotely comparable to that of Luther's time, of the need, in fact, of a thorough reformation of all relations in state, church, and society. According to the *Fama Fraternitatis*,[1] the only hope for improvement was in the combined activity of closely united like-minded men. This strange mystical writing, half fairy story, half sermon, was absolutely congenial to the spirit of this anxious, fearful, yet hopeful time; it was full of ideas of fraternity and reform, of hopes for a greater unity among men, of a higher outlook to relieve the oppressed spirit, and, best of all, hope for the near future.[2] The *Confessio Fraternitatis R. C. ad eruditos Europae*, 1615, continues the story and style of the Christian Rosenkreuz of the first writing, supposed founder of the order, and gives the rules and history of the society and its plans for the general reformation of church and state. It is true that these men believe in the possibility of producing wealth by means of the philosopher's stone, but they scorn such work in the light of their real task of redeeming mankind through true religion. The whole Rosicrucian story is important as showing the feeling of the time, a decided interest in natural philosophy, the beginnings of science, along with a strong desire for religious freedom and a true inner spiritual life.

A flood of Rosicrucian writings followed the *Fama* and

[1] Allgemeine und General Reformation der gantzen weiten Welt. Beneben der Fama Fraternitatis, dess Löblichen Ordens des Rosenkreutzes, an alle Gelehrte und Häupter Europas geschrieben, 1614.

[2] Opel, p. 288: "Das Jahrhundert ist erschienen, in welchem man das, was man vor Zeiten nur geahnt hat, endlich einmal aussprechen muss, wenn die Welt, die aus dem Kelche des Gifts und Schlummers empfangene Völlerei ausgeschlafen haben und der neu aufgehenden Sonne mit eröffnetem Herzen, entblösstem Haupte, und nackten Füssen fröhlich und freudig entgegen gehen wird."

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the *Confessio* and immediately the name "Rosenkreuzer" was assumed by a host of pretended alchemists and swindlers of the time who were taking advantage of the general interest in alchemy and belief in magic which accompanied the early study of the natural sciences. The third and last of the original Rosicrucian documents was the *Chymische Hochzeit Christiani Rosenkreutz,* 1616. This was written by Johann Valentin Andreae as early as 1602 or 1603 and helps to substantiate the now undoubted fact of Andreae's authorship[1] of the anonymous *Fama* and *Confessio.* It may also have been circulated in manuscript before 1616, as was the *Fama* as early as 1610.[2] The spread of their writings in manuscript was the common custom of the mystics and theosophical writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[3] The *Hochzeit* is more distinctly satirical than the other two; concerning it, Andreae said later that he had been carrying on a joke at the expense of the adventurous spirits of his time.[4] Possibly it was published only after the effects of the other two had been seen. The frequent use of the word "curiosus" marks the fad of the time, the pompous delving into secret and magical arts. The *Hochzeit* really warns against the gold-making promises of alchemy and the magical teachings that promise a universal panacea.[5] When Andreae became aware that his joke was being taken seriously, that the whole world was hunting for this non-existent secret order behind which all sorts of impostors were hiding, he showed the real underlying serious import of the whole Rosicrucian

[1] Opel, p. 288.
[2] Begemann: *Monatshefte der Comenius Gesellschaft,* VIII, p. 165; Opel, p. 288; Arnold, I, p. 1118; Hauck: *Rosenkreuzer.*
[3] Schneider: *Die Freimaurerei,* p. 87.
[4] Schneider, p. 96.
[5] Hauck: *Rosenkreuzer.*

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idea, of which the *Hochzeit* had been only a too youthful expression, in his *Invitatio fraternitatis Christi ad amoris candidatos,* 1617. This invitation to all high-minded men to form a Christian society or brotherhood could not be accepted, however, by reason of the Thirty Years' War.

Andreae (1586-1654) was undoubtedly one of the important men of the seventeenth century. He might have been noted alone as traveler, linguist, educator, theologian, or author. In his many friendships his many-sided spirit might be traced; to his inner circle he admitted not only such men as Arndt and Bernegger, Leibniz and Comenius, but men of high rank and members of humble guilds as well. His deep piety and moral earnestness are shown when, in his *Menippus,* 1617, he holds the mirror up to the abuses of his time, or when, in his *Reipublicae Christianopolitanae descriptio,* 1619, dedicated to Johann Arndt, he expresses his true "Rosicrucian" plan in his description of the ideal Christian state and his suggestion of a world reform, or when he attempts to reform the church along lines of practical devotion and obedience to the "inner light." Although a true Lutheran, Andreae was deeply impressed with the stern morality of the Calvinists, while utterly repudiating their teaching of predestination. He was vastly in advance of his age in favoring sects wherever their teachings seemed better than those of his own church.

In speaking of Andreae as theologian or educator, or as author of the Rosicrucian documents, we have not touched upon his real importance in this discussion of the spread and development of Neoplatonic doctrines. For that we must retrace our steps to the time of Marsilius Ficinus.

The Renaissance saw the establishment in Italy of many Neoplatonic academies or free societies, following the example given by Ficinus and the Medici in 1440. The ideal

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of the academies was not so much the increase of knowledge of the Greek language and literature, as the spread of a belief in the oneness of all mankind with the universe, an art of living rather than a system of thought,[1] based on the teachings of Christ and Plotinus. The church feared a dangerous rival in these teachers of humanity; the members of the academies were branded as heretics and the academies suppressed. The ideas, however, did not die. The strong opposition on the part of the Lutheran church since 1525, and then of the Catholic church during the counter-reformation, was offset in part by the toleration assured in the Netherlands after the beginning in 1568 of the struggle for freedom against the Spanish world-power. Under the protection of the Dukes of Orange, the ideas of humanism came forth again, to gain still greater freedom in England under Cromwell, until the ideal of these humanists became identical with that of Cromwell, to make of England the protector of all Protestant nations until the time of the world-wide rule of Protestantism should come.[2]

In Italy, the original acadamies of the fifteenth century which had died out or been suppressed, were succeeded in the sixteenth century by many institutions of the same kind, in places where they had once been suppressed as well as in other places. By 1640 the fashion of founding these societies of voluntary membership, distinct from universities and schools, had reached its height. Masson [3] speaks of some that were then "mere fraternities of young men, dubbing themselves collectively by some fantastic or humorous designation, and meeting in each other's rooms, or in gardens, to read, recite, debate. Others, with names either

[1] Keller: *Geistige Grundlagen der Freimaurerei*, p. 15.
[2] Weingarten: *Die Revolutionskirchen Englands*, p. 157.
[3] *Life of Milton*, I, pp. 604-10.

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grave or fantastic, had, by length of time and a succession of eminent members become public, and in a sense, national institutions. Among the most illustrious at this time were, in Florence, the Accademia Fiorentina, 1540, and the Accademia della Crusca, founded by seceders from the first; in Rome, the Accademia Amoristi. . . ."

In Germany, Prince Ludwig of Anhalt, with others who had been in Italy, founded in 1617 an academy on the model of the Accademia della Crusca, of which he had been a member since 1600.[1] This "fruchtbringende Gesellschaft," the Akademie zum Palmbaum, became the parent of many similar German academies, such as the "Aufrichtige Gesellschaft von der Tanne," the "Gesellschaft von den drei Rosen," the Pegnitz society, the Academia Indissolubilis. Very little was generally known regarding these societies. Their real names, the fact of their origin in Italy, and their purpose were kept secret; they announced as their program the cherishing of praiseworthy virtue and the knowledge of the mother-tongue.

Another of the Germans whose life had received new inspiration from his Italian journey was Johann Valentin Andreae. His plans for the furtherance of true Christianity in the spirit of Johann Arndt and his *Four Books of True Christianity*, for the increase of true philosophy and science and for the carrying out of these designs by means of a brotherhood of like-minded men, took form under the serious purpose of the youthful Rosicrucian writings, which he now ridiculed and opposed. Only those men blinded by a too powerful interest in wresting the secrets from nature would have overlooked in the *Fama Fraternitatis* the call for a world reformation in religion and education, for a union of all confessions and a cessation of quarrels in the

[1] *Monatshefte der Comenius Gesellschaft*, IV, p. 11.

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name of religion, for an understanding that truth may well belong simultaneously and under varying aspects to all nations,—in a word, the demand for toleration. In his later writings directed toward the formation of a Christian brotherhood for philosophical and scientific research, Andreae brought forward these same serious considerations, considerations which men like Robert Fludd very largely overlooked in their interest in defending the Rosicrucian fraternity (nicknamed by Andreae the "invisible brothers") because they were led astray by the too appealing alchemical promises of Frater Rosenkreuz. Andreae's plan came from the "living conviction that the strength of the individual was insufficient, under the too generally prevalent conditions of decline in every realm of human activity, and that since a rescue from the scientific, moral, and religious barbarism of the time must be sought it could only be found in the union of men who, animated by like Christian zeal, might in many different localities at the same time, fan the holy flame of faith, of love, and of knowledge and in their endeavor be ever strengthened by the consciousness of a great and united striving toward these noble ends." To this group of Andreae's writings belong *Invitatio fraternitatis Christi ad amoris candidatos,* part one 1617, part two 1618; *Christianae societatis idea* and *Christiani amoris dextra porrecta,* 1620. This society of scholars and Christians called at first "Civitas solis," then "Societas christiana" or "Unio christiana," for which many of Andreae's friends were ready, was not organized because these friends were separated and scattered by the Thirty Years' War. This destruction of his hopes, Andreae laments in a letter to Comenius, 1629, expressing his real purpose in the following words: "Our aim was to restore Christ to his proper place and to combat the idols

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of science and religion."[1] Among these friends of Andreae's were many whom we find later in other humanistic societies: Wilhelm von der Wense and Tobias Adami, pupils of Campanella, Johann Kepler, discoverer of the laws of planetary motion, Matthias Bernegger, Joachim Jungius, Theodor Haak, Samuel Hartlib, John Dury, and Comenius.

That these various societies had deeper motives than those generally ascribed to them is certain. The Italian academies, after the pattern of which the "Order of the Palm" was founded, must have been, to a certain extent at least, secret societies, since neither their organization, their symbolism, their forms, nor the list of membership was communicated to outsiders, and their real aims were concealed while publicity was given to purposes of a genuinely innocent and popular nature.[2] That the German organizations were not the mere language societies they were generally considered is apparent when we look at the activities of their members. They emphasized the study of the mother-tongue, it is true, but there was hardly a writer among them who was not also interested in the study of natural philosophy, in religion, in mathematics or astronomy, so much so, in fact, that to most of them clung the suspicion of heresy—that they were Rosicrucians and as such members of a religious sect highly dangerous to the church and liable of course to persecution. Members of the seventeenth-century academies were natural philosophers, reformers, theologians, educators, statesmen, poets, noblemen; such members there were, as Bacon, Giordano Bruno, Comenius, Robert Boyle, J. B. van Helmont, Campanella, Hugo Grotius, Leibniz, Oxenstierna, Valentin Andreae, Spanheim, Pufendorf, Opitz.[3] Through-

[1] Guhrauer: *Joachim Jungius und sein Zeitalter*, p. 64.
[2] *M. C. G.*, IV, p. 26.
[3] *M. C. G.*, XIV, p. 122.

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out the whole list of membership there runs a line of spiritual relationship in the fact of their tolerance for the beliefs of others, a tolerance remarkable for the seventeenth century. With this they united strict opposition to the scholastic method. They were seriously religious, even to the extent of being mystics, but they understood the essence of Christianity differently from the ruling dogma. They treat not only of the relation of man to God, but of man to nature and of men to each other. For them a knowledge incapable of helping mankind had no value; a science shut off from the people in its language is useless; hence their emphasis of the vernacular. To make all knowledge fruitful for the education of the human race and thus lead the race on to a higher stage of development was one of their great ideals. Their turn for the practical led them on in their striving for a general reformation of the whole world. With their keen sense of the significance of fraternal organization, they formed unions which were intended to benefit the whole man and his whole mode of thinking, to influence his whole life. Their activities were in no way directed, as has been claimed, toward "childish play with symbols and signs but toward inclusive spiritual, religious, philosophical, and scientific aims,"[1] the carrying out of which, in those times, could be accomplished only under secret organization. The difficulties under which they labored compelled them to proceed with extreme caution, concealing their real interests and exhibiting to the world only what they considered secondary. When the time and place is more propitious for a franker carrying out of their plans and purposes of reform, we shall find them in a country of larger opportunity; we shall find them in England.

[1] *M. C. G.*, XVI, p. 234. See also IV, pp. 26, 29.

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In the meantime we must go back to the beginning of a new power, that is, to the renewal of the same old power under the guise of a new prophet in whose teachings the desire for reform, educational, ecclesiastical, political, mingled with the highest form of mystical religious thought, —the form in which Neoplatonism gained an expression in which its influence has reached the religion and literature, the science and philosophy of even modern times. This was in the writings of that giant of mysticism, the "inspired shoemaker" Jakob Boehme (1575-1624), or Behmen, as he has generally been called in England.

In his own day, Boehme was called by some "the Teutonic philosopher" or Teutonicus. A philosopher he must have been, for "from however many different standpoints after him the totality of things was viewed and whatever principles of knowledge were discovered, he had indicated them one and all."[1] Yet he was only an illiterate and untrained peasant,—a peasant, however, who was gifted with a most marvelous and astonishing genius for the transcendent. He was born near the Bohemian frontier at Alt-Seidenberg near Görlitz. He had a little instruction in reading, writing, and religion at the village school. As a child he was quiet and thoughtful, living in imagination in a world of German goblins and fairies. Wonderful visions came to him, to his excited fancy taking the form of external occurrences; such was doubtless his experience, during his apprenticeship to a shoemaker, of talking with the stranger who predicted his future greatness and sufferings. Dismissed on account of his gentle, yet too insistent piety, he finished his training under various masters. On his wanderings he observed with sadness the enmity existing between churches and even within the church itself. He read religious and astrological books,

[1] Carriere, I, p. 310.

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works by Schwenkfeld and Sebastian Franck, Paracelsus and Weigel among others, and prayed ardently for an indwelling of the Holy Spirit. In due time he became master-shoemaker and married in Görlitz. Outwardly, he lived a quiet, hard-working life; inwardly, he lived in a glory of illumination and revelation. The mysteries revealed to him he tried to explain, but he had no trained medium of expression. He must ever be rediscovered and reinterpreted.

At critical times in history, at times of greatness in science, art, and moral actions, forces that are working generally among men break forth powerfully and suddenly in the case of individuals. The form and content of the experience is largely dependent upon the character of the individual, yet so opposed is it to the usual experience of his ordinary life, that he is almost forced to regard it objectively, as if it were happening to another; it bursts without reflection from the depths of the soul, and seems like a gift from on high. Such enthusiasm of knowledge or creation appearing suddenly, especially to an unprepared person, results in a condition often passing into ecstasy; it utterly overwhelms the body as Plotinus explains, to whom the experience came as it did to St. Paul, and as it has to many another mystic. Such insight into nature and God came likewise to Boehme. After his third experience of this sort, he began to write *Die Morgenröthe im Aufgang,* simply for himself as a memorial. Once known in manuscript, under the name *Aurora* given to it by a friend, this book raised bitterest opposition among the clergy; at the same time it won friends among scientists and philosophers who encouraged him to continue writing. With training in self-expression and an environment of encouragement instead of continued persecution, Boehme might have been the very man fitted to complete Luther's half-finished work of church-

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reformation and to bring about a reconciliation between science and faith, such as we are still lacking in our day.

The *Aurora* was never finished. It would doubtless never have been a clear statement of Boehme's system. That comes out much more clearly in his later works. He believed, with all mystics, in the ultimate unity of the nature of God and all things, but he emphasized particularly the characteristics of trinity in this unity, which comes from his fundamental assertion that all manifestation necessitates opposition. This law of opposition is uniform throughout all existence, physical and spiritual alike. He also insists upon the doctrine of rebirth, which the earlier German mystics had loved, the regeneration or being born in God, which is a consciousness of the "inner light."

Boehme starts with the Godhead, the abyss out of which all being issues; it is the primordial condition of all being and therefore without substance, natures, or qualities; the eternal silence, the All and the No-thing; neither darkness nor light; manifest to none, not even to Himself. This principle of all things, the divine, unlimited, indivisible existence or ultimate unity, in its desire for self-expression or manifestation, includes within itself the Trinity: Love and the desire of love as the Son, and the expression of this love, the Holy Spirit. According to the law of opposition, when God, the triune principle or Will under three aspects, desires to become manifest, the Will appears as two elements, affirmative and negative. An eternal contrast is thus discovered in God's own hidden nature. But the leveling and merging, the equalization and assimilation of the contrast must follow. However, we are never to consider this trinity of the opposing wills and their struggle as a temporal process; Boehme repeatedly warns us that, on account of human weakness, he must describe as a time-process that

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which is eternal, and place side by side things which are in reality interdependent and joined with one another in perfect unity.

This contrariety upon which the self-manifestation of God depends Boehme takes from the scriptural divine elements of Love and Wrath. All further development and creation result from this contrariety. Thus the object of all manifested nature is to follow the path of the assimilation of the two opposing wills, the transforming of the "No" into the "Yes." This is brought about by seven organizing spirits or forms. The first three of these, representing God's wrath, bring nature out of Chaos and darkness to the point where contact with light is possible. Boehme calls them harshness, attraction, and anguish; in modern terms, contraction, expansion, and rotation. The first two are absolutely antagonistic forces; brought into collision, they form an endless whirling movement. They represent, in fact, the three laws of motion, centripetal and centrifugal force resulting in rotation. They are the basis of the manifestation of nature, the power of God without the love. The last three of the seven organizing spirits represent God's love. Boehme calls them light or love, sound and substance. They are spiritual forces and in them contraction, expansion, and rotation are repeated on a different plane. The first three forms give the material or strength of being, the last three, the quality; while the central or fourth form constitutes the pivot-point of both realms, common to the wrath or darkness and to the love or light. Thus there are these three omnipotent principles of life in the two forces and their resultant effect. They are often called by different names, as light, darkness, and their union which is the visible world, or good, evil, and life, or God, the devil, and the world. A continuous uniting and

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separating, an eternal attraction and repulsion, an everlasting love and wrath is necessary to life. This is the law of opposites.

The practical and ethical character of Boehme's teachings is shown in what seems his attempt to harmonize the undeniable claim of pantheism that God is not to be known out of and apart from nature but in it and through it, with the equally undeniable fact of the evident opposition in this divine world of good and evil. He cannot make light of the fact of evil and explain it away as merely negative, as the unavoidable shadow to the light, for it is vastly more than that. For him the solution of the problem lies very deep and becomes only possible by looking upon the human soul not as a mode of divine substance, nor as the work of the Creator merely, but rather as absolutely self-existent. In other words, good and evil, heaven and hell, are to be looked upon as opposed possibilities within the soul, in relation to which the soul possesses perfect liberty of choice and full independence from any external influence and from any predetermined inherent condition; for even this is the deep meaning of the word free-will.

The possible good and evil latent in God and therefore in the human soul, become actual only when the soul in its primal freedom chooses the one or the other. The soul is not a being different from God, but, on the contrary, is fundamentally the divine substance itself, inasmuch as it brings into reality the possible opposition between good and evil. Therefore our rebirth and salvation through the Christ within us are but a return to our own primal divine being, but it must come as an act of the will. Will or desire is, in fact, the root of all manifestation, of all life, the radical force in man as in nature and in the Godhead. Ever-continuing creation is expressed in the human soul through

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thought or imagination; out of these is born will and from will, actions. The state of our will makes the state of our life. Man as manifestation of God bears the seal of the Trinity in his three-fold nature; his soul from God, his spirit from the stars, his body from the elements. In his own realm he is the microcosm. Evil is any assertion of self, a turning away from God to independence apart from Him. It appears first as pride in the archangel Lucifer, in his selfish desire to be more than others. Man, created as a perfect being, was higher than the angels and greater than the fallen Lucifer, because he was complete. But he lost the inner divine wisdom from his nature by imitating Lucifer in his desire for separateness from his origin, lost therefore his completeness and was separated into the two sexes, under the forms of Adam and Eve. Hence marriage is holy, since only through union with his complementary nature can the individual hope to gain in part his birthright of harmonious completeness.

The relation to his own times comes out clearly in Boehme's teachings regarding freedom of conscience, preference for Christ's church invisible to churches "made of stone" with their learned but uninspired clergy, and expectation of the speedy appearance of peace and harmony throughout the whole earth. He did not condemn the sacraments, but considered them simply outward symbols of the inner Christ, helpful according to the measure of our faith. He upheld the necessity of government until all men return to full freedom in God, but hoped for reform along many lines. War was for him an abomination. His obscure language and difficult symbolism, also a mark of his age, have always made him extremely difficult to interpret. Readers of all times have been seriously disturbed by the prevalence of the confusing cabalistic and alchemical im-

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agery which is the result of his acquaintance with the works of Paracelsus. Troeltsch definitely states [1] that his system is founded upon impressions from Paracelsus, Schwenkfeld, and Weigel. He might well mention Sebastian Franck also. But whether because Boehme was a theoretical alchemist [2] or because of the curious fascination, particularly at that time, of his mysterious language and the vagueness of his directions regarding the search for the philosopher's stone, certain it is that many alchemists read his works with sincere and eager devotion and that this aspect of his writings is thoroughly in accord with van Helmont and Robert Fludd. To us now it is beyond measure strange, the profound influence of this simple peasant upon such varied types of individuality as may be met in his train,—alchemists and lawyers, learned educators and simple tradesmen, peasants and poets, preachers and philosophers.

[1] Troeltsch: *Soziallehren der Christlichen Kirchen und Gruppen*, in *Gesammelte Schriften*, I, p. 898.
[2] Adolf v. Harless: *Jakob Boehme und die Alchymisten.*

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II

ENGLISH MYSTICISM BEFORE BOEHME

Of the three great factors uniting to bring about the sixteenth-century reformation, fourteenth- and fifteenth-century England had developed only one. After King John paid homage to Pope Innocent III as his liege lord, parliamentary legislation had been directed toward separating England from Rome. Opposition to the Pope was in England naturally enough political rather than religious. It is true that on the continent likewise the idea of an independent state had been taking definite form perhaps ever since the fall of the Hohenstaufen dynasty; it had been strengthened by the opposition to the popes at Avignon; at the same time the great church councils of the fifteenth century had everywhere fostered the growing desire for national churches. But only in England was this shaking off of the foreign yoke and this subordination of church to state at all complete. This was Henry VIII's great reformation and England's first contribution to the reformation as a whole.

But the other two great factors, the mystical and humanistic contributions to the reformation, were in England of minor importance. England had had no Meister Eckhart, no Tauler, no Thomas à Kempis, no *Theologia Germanica* with their sincere and heartfelt teachings preparing the hearts of the people for a radical change in their religious life. They had had no Luther, a leader of the people whose personality had been steeped in the devout and popular ele-

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ments of German mysticism. Of themselves the English people were not ready for a change from dependence on external authority to absolute autonomy. For in spite of the religious and devotional fervor of the English mystics from Richard Rolle of Hampole and his followers to Julian of Norwich, the English reformation had been merely political, and when the time came for a sweeping change in the inner religious life, not the English but the German mystics were generally read in England.

English humanistic culture had a similar fate. Erasmus had taught there, it is true; but his influence hardly extended beyond the nobility. Thomas More had expounded in his *Utopia* (1516) an ideal of a state in which ecclesiastical hierarchy was unknown. But he finished his career as a powerful opponent of the reformation, and without founding any school of humanism. Henry VIII's church had merely substituted upon the old established beliefs and ceremonies, a royal for a papal head—the result of a royal act, not of a development in which the people had any real share. The bishops retained their old power in a system subjected to the growing dangers of multiplication of benefices and lack of interest on the part of a hireling clergy. The new Anglican church was naturally separate, yet related to a reformed church on the continent, and reformed, yet retaining a hierarchical system. An opposition to its outer form might come as a further development of the political forces that had helped to produce it; upon its relation to the reformed churches of other lands must depend its inner development.

In Germany the reformation was likewise incomplete; it was not carried to its promised and logical conclusion until in certain phases of Pietism it finally approached more nearly to the ideal for which Luther and Zwingli had

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striven.[1] The subjectivity represented by mysticism meant freedom of the individual; the benevolent fraternity of humanism meant a free church of voluntary membership. Whereas in principle the reformers announced the sovereignty and priesthood of the individual, in practice they submerged personal faith under an authority almost as rigid and unspiritual as in the system they were seeking to overthrow. Luther's ideal of "every man his own judge" was supplanted by his scholastic notion of the absolute depravity of man resultant from his fall; his thought of the universal priesthood of man could not hold out against his inherited feeling of the necessity of a state church to root out heresy. The ideal of a church on the New Testament model was lowered to the standard familiar through custom and tradition. As the Lutheran creed and dogma developed, freedom was more and more lost sight of, until speedily a church of fixed forms and beliefs had grown up. The letter-bound Lutheran orthodoxy represented a victory of one of the essential elements of religion over the other, the victory of the traditional over the mystical element, the submission of the ever-changing, personal, inspirational force to the permanent, unchanging, conservative force that binds the ages together. For a state church, by its very nature, is bound to look with disfavor upon all purely personal religion. It is bound to disregard the fact that just as long as the two elements—mysticism and tradition—are harmoniously combined, as long as organized religion on the one hand resists a strong tendency to settle into a sacred form or system, as long as divinely illuminated souls on the other hand do not exalt their own experience and ignore the gains of the race in the light of master-revelations of the past, just so long will religion remain ideal and powerful. This lack of bal-

[1] Weingarten: *Die Revolutionskirchen Englands*, p. 442.

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ance between the two elements has caused the church throughout the ages to denounce the mystics, whom they have branded with varying names as time went on, as Simonites, Gnostics, New Prophets, Anabaptists, Paracelsians, Boehmenists, Rosicrucians, Pietists, Separatists, Quakers, Enthusiasts, heretics, fanatics!

The German reformation had not been entirely confined, as we have seen, to the work of the creed-makers. The lack of incentive toward the development of a truly devout spiritual freedom under the strict Lutheran dogma, the glaring inconsistencies of the great reformers, and the consequent need of a deeper reformation was keenly felt by the thinkers of the time who were likewise thoroughly imbued with the leavening power of a belief in the Divine Presence.[1] These men were a result of that acute and intense religious feeling—not necessarily confined to Christianity—which puts emphasis upon immediate relationship to God, upon direct and intimate consciousness of divine inner light. Under the leadership of such men the growth of this mystical side of religion made great progress. It bore rapid fruit in the development of new religious forms or communities along with and also within the Lutheran church. But the German church of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the political plaything of princes, could offer no place for the development of an institution fitted to this group of thinkers and their ideas, centered about freedom. Naturally sects must arise; also they must be persecuted and driven out as were the various Anabaptist groups. Divisions must arise within the church itself. In 1571, for instance, one hundred and eleven preachers were driven out of Saxony by Electoral Prince August. Later the Lutherans even united with the Catholics to drive the Cal-

[1] Ritschl: *Geschichte des Pietismus*, I, p. 80.

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vinists from the same territory. By the year 1600 the conscience of the counter-reformation had caused Austria and Bohemia to drive out thousands of their most industrious and law-abiding citizens.

In Holland these fugitives found a home. During the struggle with the Spanish Inquisition, the Dutch leaders in 1576 had united in a pledge of religious toleration. This struggle for freedom seemed to bring prosperity to the Netherlands; her trade and industry developed amazingly. Unconditioned freedom of trade and commerce kept pace with the freedom of faith, of science, and of the press,—a freedom which made of this one nation a refuge for the persecuted of all lands. In such a home the great religious movement, yet untouched in its depths by the German reformation, took form under the influence of German mystics, Baptists, and humanists expelled from Germany, and found its way to England, carrying the beginnings of the advanced liberal ideas of to-day. A great many Dutch weavers, who were permitted by Elizabeth to settle in England, "helped to make England Protestant, and thus laid a lasting basis for her wealth; but at the same time they did even more than this; for in helping to make her Protestant they also helped to make her free." [1]

England's reformation century is the seventeenth, not the sixteenth. Not until the reign of the Stuarts and in the struggle against them does separation inward as well as outward from the Church of Rome become the affair of the whole nation, and the history of the English church the history of a spiritual and religious movement.[2] There, amid civil war, the fundamental forces of religious freedom

[1] Douglas Campbell: *The Puritan in England, Holland, and America,* London, 1892, I, chap. x, p. 429.

[2] Weingarten, pp. 1 ff.

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work out their destiny and in England the Protestant reformation reaches its final conclusion.

As a continuous movement the English reformation may be said to begin in the reign of Edward VI (1547-1553), when Hooper declined to be consecrated as bishop under Catholic ceremonies. The name Puritan was first given[1] to non-conformists early in Elizabeth's reign (1558-1603), to those who, continuing the opposition to ceremonies and the wearing of church vestments, yet remained within the church. During the persecution under Mary (1553-1558) many fugitives had found shelter in the reformed countries of the continent, particularly in Germany and Holland. In the churches in Zürich, Strassburg, Frankfurt-am-Main, and other places their creed was strongly modified by Calvinism. From Geneva and Frankfurt Knox returned to Scotland, where, in the foundation of a national church with a rigorous Presbyterian constitution, this Calvinistic Puritanism soon reached the highest point of development. But the Calvinistic spirit of other returning refugees, although similar to the original Puritan spirit, had no such triumph in England. It must first encounter another foreign element in the teachings of the Anabaptists. These teachings must have been known in England as early as 1533 among the educated as well as the lower classes, although there was at that time no talk of any such English sect.[2] In 1534 the name Anabaptist appears in English documents. In 1535, 1538, and again in 1539 large groups of Anabaptists came from Holland. Their doctrines began at once to attract attention. In 1541 under Henry VIII "an act concerning the King's most gracious, general and

[1] Fuller: *Church History,* II, p. 474.

[2] A. W. Boehme: *Reformation der Kirche in England,* pp. 151-53.

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free pardon" expressly excludes from this pardon the heresies and erroneous opinions of the Anabaptists.[1] It would seem, however, that during the sixteenth century there was no decided growth of the sect. The name had too recently been associated with the fall of Münster and with events revolting to the sober-minded Englishman. Nevertheless the new doctrines became generally known; they merged with the important elements of the earlier English religious movements—the evangelical doctrines of Wyclif and the practical devotion of the early English mystics —until Anabaptism in its new environment became the spiritual soil from which all non-conformist sects sprang. "It was the first plain announcement in modern history of a program for a new type of Christian society which the modern world, especially in America and England, has been slowly realizing—an absolutely free and independent religious society, a state in which every man counts as a man and has his share in shaping both church and state." [2]

In spite of the immediate opposition to Anabaptist teachings, the appearance and progress of its ideals within the English church is soon apparent. Puritan conventicles, the first result of Elizabeth's zeal for conformity, developed in time into separatist congregations. Not all Puritans, however, left the state church. From petitions to James I (1603-1625)[3] during the first years of his reign, it is apparent that the older English Puritans were interested not, as were the Scotch, mainly in the fundamental question of church constitution, but rather in the right of freedom to

[1] Edmund Gibson: *Codex Juris Ecclesiastici Anglicani*, Oxford, 1761, p. 516.
[2] R. M. Jones: *Studies in Mystical Religion*, p. 367.
[3] Fuller: III, pp. 215-20.

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preach. A more positive opposition to a state church as such came first through the Brownists.

In Norfolk some Baptists of Holland had found refuge from Alba's cruelty. Robert Browne, chaplain of the Duke of Norfolk, spent much time with them and in his restless, passionate nature their ideas found rapid growth. In *A book which showeth the Life and Manner of all true Christians,* 1582, he defines a state church as Antichrist. The true church he considers a free community of believers. His followers separated from the English church. Though Browne himself returned to it later, his early teachings spread. In 1594 many Brownists, preferring exile to imprisonment, took refuge in Holland. In 1598 they published their *Confession of faith of certain English people, living in the Low Countries, exiled.* In addition to their idea of religious freedom might here be noted as important to the course of the English reformation their objection to prescribed forms of prayer which hinder the work of the Spirit; their insistence upon the life of Christ within us as the highest goal attainable; and their rejection of preachers "learned only according to the schools" whom they regarded as Pharisees and pretenders. Under the Brownist leaders Francis Johnson, Henry Ainsworth, and John Robinson in England and Holland, the idea of the "congregational way" came to full consciousness, that is, the idea of the autonomy of each individual congregation, the absolute separation of church and state. This idea was taken up by non-separatist Puritans, as well as by separatist Brownists and Baptists. About 1640 it was nicknamed "Independency," and Puritans and Separatists alike were called Independents.

Early in the history of Independency a strife arose regarding the position of elders in the church. This was clearly

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expressive of the new spirit of religious democracy. Combined with the common hope of a continuing and immediate reformation, this opposition to ecclesiastical aristocracy was to form in the near future the strongest kind of a political party out of these adherents to the "congregational way." The part then played by the Independents in the English revolution—how they were recruited from the older, non-congregational Puritan party, and even from the Presbyterians, while yet engaged in a bitter struggle with both, how under Cromwell's leadership they became the powerful advocates of liberty in every realm, how they all but turned England into the "fifth monarchy"—these facts belong to the second or enthusiastic period of Independency. With the death of John Robinson, 1625, the old preacher who blessed the Pilgrim fathers as they started on their way to America, to "clear a path for the kingdom of Christ to the remote ends of the earth," the first period of Independency came to an end.

From the beginning of the reign of Charles I (1625-1649) to Cromwell's protectorate (1653), the form of the church constitution was the crucial question. In only one point was the Episcopacy, for which Archbishop Laud was striving, different from Catholicism: all power and authority belonged to the crown instead of to the church. Laud did more toward founding a new papacy than Henry VIII had done. The building up of a kingdom of Christ as a theocracy after the Old Testament model was the fundamental thought of Presbyterianism. Its demand for a reformation of church and state according to the word of God was in reality nothing but a demand for rulership by a spiritual aristocracy and, in fact, according to "divine right." The people in general were much more closely bound to Presbyterianism, by reason of the influence of the Puritans,

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than they were to Episcopacy. But that austere faith, in spite of its strong hold in Scotland, lacked the ideals which were to win the hearts of the English people. These ideals were furnished by Independency.[1]

That the appearance of the Lord and of His church upon this earth was very near at hand had been the general belief of mysticism throughout the German reformation. The Separatists during their banishment were comforted by the same chiliastic ideas; they believed that Independency was the beginning, or at least the antecedent, of Christ's kingdom upon earth. Burroughs and Goodwin, after their return to England, became fiery preachers of such beliefs, always emphasizing the principle: "not the head but the heart makes the Christian." During this period Independency progressed along two lines: its purely religious aspect found development in various new sects, and its final conclusion in the Quakers; its political aspect, of which the first form is represented by Levellers[2] and Diggers, evolved the principle of individual freedom until it reached the point of becoming the impelling force of modern political life.

The idea of a national church was impossible to the adherents of the "congregational way." They had no knowledge of the historical progress and development of the church as an institution, and no comprehension of the necessity or justification of such a growth. They considered each separate congregation a law unto itself; only as an unorganized complex of individual congregations could the visible church have any relationship to the invisible church or spiritual community of all believers. This was partly the result of the Calvinistic foundation of the older Puritanism

[1] Weingarten, pp. 71-75.
[2] G. P. Gooch: *English Democratic Ideas in the Seventeenth Century*, Cambridge, 1898.

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upon which the adherents of the "congregational way" had built. According to their practice members of a congregation could be only "believers" who could give real evidence of their "election" and true regeneration.[1] Such a church was obliged therefore to oppose all church offices and authority in order to destroy human authority in the realm of faith, so that men might be subject only to God. They had no carefully worked out theological dogma in spite of the many dogmatic controversies in which they became involved and the hundreds of heresies that were attributed to them. But the one thought from which their activity and development must be explained stands out ever more clearly—their ardent desire to understand and grasp fully religious life in its immediacy, in the depth of its whole being a demand for inspiration and revelation.

So far, in the presentation of the early history of the epoch of enthusiastic religion, we have spoken directly only of the Anabaptist and Brownist sects. Other sects and other influences had a part in producing this general mystical atmosphere. Since the middle of the sixteenth century there had been in England members of the "Family of Love" or Familists, a sect that had arisen on the continent shortly after the Anabaptists, and had its great second flourishing period in England during the seventeenth century, through the Commonwealth (1650-1660). The sect was founded in Holland about 1540 by Henrick Niclaes (1502-*c.* 1580), a Catholic, who came under the influence of David George or Joris, since 1534 an Anabaptist. Henry Nicholas, as he is generally called, interpreted the whole Bible allegorically, saying that as Moses taught hope and Christ faith, it was his mission to teach love. About 1550 he visited England. His teachings were

[1] Robert Baillie: *Letters*, II, p. 236.

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further propagated there by Christopher Vittel, a joiner, who appears to have undertaken a missionary journey throughout the country about 1560. Fuller[1] states that in 1578 the "Family of Love began now to grow so numerous, factious, and dangerous that the Privy Council thought fit to endeavor their suppression."

The same year (1578), John Rogers, a bitter but fair-minded Protestant, published an account of their doctrines in *The Displaying of an Horrible Sect of Gross and Wicked Heretics naming themselves the Family of Love.* They were not Separatists, however, but church-goers who held private gatherings. Before 1600 they probably attracted but few converts, and even until 1620 they must have made slow progress. In 1623 Edmund Jessop, after narrowly escaping being converted to Familism, gave an account of their doctrines. "They say, that when Adam sinned, then Christ was killed, and Anti Christ came to live. They teach that the same perfection of holiness which Adam [had?] before he fell, is to be attained here in this life; and affirme that all their family of love are as perfect and innocent as he. And that the resurrection of the dead, spoken of by St. Paul in the 1. Cor. 15 and this prophesie, *Then shall be fulfilled the saying which is written, O death, where is thy sting, O grave, where is thy victory?* is fulfilled in them, and deny all other resurrection of the body to be after this life. They will have this blasphemer H. N. [Henry Nicholas] to be the sonne of God, Christ, which was to come in the end of the world to judge the world; and say, that the day of judgment is already come; and that H. N. judgeth the world now by his doctrine; so that whosoever doth not obey his Gospel, shall (in time) be rooted out of the world; and that his Family of love shall

[1] *Church History,* IV, p. 407.

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inherite and inhabite the earth forever, world without end; only (they say) they shall die in the bodie, as now men do, and their soules go to heaven, but their posterities shall continue forever. . . . He maketh every one of his Family of love to be Christ, yea and God, and himself God and Christ in a more excellent manner, saying, that he is Godded with God, and codeified with him, and that God is hominified with him."[1]

Even such a prejudiced account does not entirely conceal the fact that the Familists represented a lofty type of mystical religion that insisted upon spiritualizing this world rather than dogmatizing about the next. In their insistence upon the Divine Light and Life within the Soul and upon the unimportance of outward forms and ceremonies, in their objection to taking oaths and carrying arms, and in their demand for religious toleration, the Familists closely resembled the Anabaptists. Although they hold that there is but one spirit, the absolute and essential God, in all creatures in heaven, earth, and hell, and that heaven and hell are really within man, they make no attempt to explain evil, or to give it, in fact, any recognized place in their system. They believe in a perfection to be achieved and maintained here and now. The Bible, the facts of the creation and fall of man, are of no especial significance to them; the "light within" is the one overwhelming fact. From about 1630 onward we find controversial literature abounding in references to the Familists and their heresies. Familist, like Anabaptist, became a general term of reproach. Many of the Familist books were reprinted in English. In *Pilgrim's Progress* Bunyan immortalized the allegoric-mystical journey of H. N. [Henry Nicholas], prophet of the

[1] Edmund Jessop: *A Discovery of the Errors of the English Anabaptists*, London, 1623, pp. 88-90.

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Family of Love.[1] A confutation of their errors appearing in 1646[2] recognized their relation to the teachings of the *Theologia Germanica* and to the great Neoplatonic movement. By confusing the mystical and magical elements, a mistake common to that time, the author explains the sympathy of the Familists for the alchemists by their close relationship to the older mystics, the sympathy suggested by the statement: "The Familists are very confident that by the knowledge of astrologie and the strength of reason, they shall be able to conquer the world."[3] The *Theologia Germanica* was published in English by an avowed Familist.[4]

Related in thought at least to the Familists were a number of mystical teachers belonging apparently, in spite of the accusations of their opponents, to no sect whatever. Independently, and to a great extent unwittingly, they carried along the mystical, spiritualistic tradition. The most important of these individuals was John Everard (*c.* 1575-1645[5]), Cambridge doctor of theology, exceedingly popular preacher, the earliest English disciple of Tauler. After his conversion to mysticism he was continually accused of

[1] Ernst Troeltsch: *Soziallehren der Christlichen Kirchen u. Gruppen*, p. 402, note.

[2] Benjamin Bourne: *The Description and Confutation of Mysticall Anti-Christ, the Familists, or an information drawn up and published for the Confirmation and Comfort of the Faithfull, against many Anti-Christian Familisticall Doctrines which are frequently preached and printed in English; particularly in those dangerous books called Theologia Germanica, the Bright Star, Divinity and Philosophy dissected*, London, 1646.

[3] From Chapter I of above.

[4] *Theologia Germanica. Or Mysticall Divinitie:* A Little Golden Manuall briefly Discovering the mysteries, sublimity, perfection and simplicity of Christianity, in Belief and Practice, London, 1648. Preface signed by Giles Randall.

[5] *Notes and Queries*, 2nd series, VII, p. 457, June 4, 1859.

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Familism and Anabaptism and often imprisoned for holding conventicles. He translated the *Theologia Germanica,* also writings of Tauler, Dionysius, Hans Denck, and became the pioneer of quietistic mysticism in England. After his death some of his sermons and translations were collected and published in three successive editions, 1653, 1657, 1659.[1] The sermons are edifying and practical rather than speculative and metaphysical; their main ideas are in the sermon on "suffering and ruling with Christ." Everard quotes Plato, Plotinus, Proclus, Origenes, Dionysius, St. Augustine, St. Bernhard, St. Francis.

Of a similar spirit was Francis Rous (1579-1659), who was made Provost of Eton College in 1644, and a member of every Parliament from 1625 until 1656. Until about

[1] *The Gospel-Treasury Opened; or the Holyest of all Unvailing:* Discovering yet more the Riches of Grace and Glory; to the Vessels of Mercy Unto whom only it is given to know the mysteries of that Kingdom and the Excellency of Spirit, Power, Truth above Letter, Forms, Shadows. In several Sermons . . . by John Everard D. D. deceased. The second edition much enlarged. Whereunto is added the *Mystical Divinity of Dionysius the Areopagite, . . . with collections out of other Divine Authors,* translated by D. Everard, never before printed in England. London. Printed for Ralph Harford, 1659. Cambridge MS. Dd. XII 68 has John Everard, author of *Three Books, translated out of their originall: First, the Letter and the Life, or the Flesh and the Spirit; secondly, German Divinitie; thirdly, the Vision of God,* written 1638. The first only is included in *The Gospel-Treasury Opened.* It was part of a treatise that was later published in London under the title *The Mumial Treatise of Tenzelius, being a natural account of the Tree of Life and of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, with a mystical interpretation of that great Secret, to wit, the Cabalistical Concordance of the Tree of Life and Death, of Christ and Adam.* Translated by N. Turner, London, 1657. Tenzel's work is founded on Tauler and *German Divinity (Theologia Germanica). The Vision of God,* mentioned "thirdly" above, is probably a translation of Tractatus de Visione Dei by John Scotus Erigena, a treatise which has never been printed. See *Notes and Queries,* 4th series, I, p. 597.

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1625 his writings show him as a sound Puritan divine. About 1648 he joined the Independents. Long before this, however, he had begun the study of mystical writings. His *Mystical Marriage or experimental Discourses of the Heavenly marriage between a Soule and her Saviour,* London, 1635 (reprinted 1653), and *Heavenly Academie,* 1638 (several times reprinted), show the subjective and devotional type of mystic piety. He quotes Thomas à Kempis, St. Bernhard, and Dionysius the Areopagite.

With the interest in the inner life of religion came the growing popular demand for religious freedom, a demand that found straightforward and determined expression as early as 1644 in a pamphlet on *Liberty of Conscience*—"the compelling of a man to do anything against his own conscience, especially in matters of faith, is a doing of evil." William Dell (1607-1664) and John Saltmarsh (*c.* 1613-1647), chaplains in the army[1] and later friends of Cromwell, preached to an attentive, vigorous-minded, and religious soldiery the doctrines of the "inner light" and liberty. They were also very active mystical writers. Saltmarsh expresses thoughts so similar to Sebastian Franck's that it seems he must have known Franck's writings.[2] He was of Magdalene College, Cambridge, took orders about 1639 as a zealous advocate of Episcopacy and conformity.

[1] "A Survey of the Spiritual Anti-Christ Opening the Secrets of Familisme and Antinomianisme in the Anti-Christian doctrine of John Saltmarsh, William Dell, the present preachers of the army now in England. In which is revealed the rise and spring of Antinomians, Familists, Libertines, Swenck-feldians, Enthysiasts, etc., Samuel Rutherford, London, 1647." (A very typical tract).

[2] Troeltsch, p. 889, note: "Von Franck's Schriften in England wird Herr Sippell berichten, der sie in dortigen Archiven aufgefunden. Ein Mann wie Saltmarsh scheint mir ohne Franck unverständlich; es sind überall verwandte Gedanken, zugleich von einer gewinnenden menschlichen Liebenswürdigkeit."

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In 1643, however, he resigned his preferment from scruples concerning the acceptance of tithes, returning to public use all that he had already received, and "embracing with ardor the cause of church reform, reaching by degrees the position of a very sincere, if eccentric, champion of complete religious liberty. This change in his views seems to have been produced by his intimacy with Sir John Hotham."[1] It is a striking coincidence that whereas Sir John Hotham, soldier on the side of the Independents, is generally considered to have had no particular religious feelings or convictions, he was the father of Charles and Durant Hotham, of whom we shall hear later as mystical teachers, probably the earliest disciples of Boehme in Cambridge. Saltmarsh found a sympathetic critic, possibly a friend, in John Dury. Two of his books deserve a high place among spiritual works: *Holy Discoveries,* London, 1640, and *Sparkles of Glory or some Beams of the Morning Star,* London, 1647.

William Dell's program of church reform was expressed in words very similar to Luther's. In reality, he had gone beyond Luther in his demands. His whole doctrine of salvation is not Lutheran but mystical; the true church of Christ on earth can consist only of true believers, of those who have evidence from the "inner light" that they have been "born again."[2] But Dell made apparently no effort to realize his ideals. Like Saltmarsh he joined none of the contemporary sects. Later the Quakers put his ideas to the test of practical application.

A mystical contemporary of John Everard's was the Venerable Augustine Baker (1575-1641), "one of the most

[1] Article on Saltmarsh: *Dictionary of National Biography.*

[2] Theodor Sippell: *William Dell's Programm einer lutherischen Gemeinschaftsbewegung,* Tübingen, 1911.

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lucid and orderly of guides to the contemplative life."[1] His authorities were the older English mystics, Richard Rolle, Hilton, the unknown author of the *Cloud of Unknowing* (about 1350-1400),[2] and the older German mystics Tauler, Suso, and the Flemish Ruysbroeck. Through these writers, as we know, the line of descent goes back to the early writers who brought Neoplatonism into the church. From Father Baker's MSS. were compiled by Father Serenus Cressy devotional books for contemplative souls.[3]

A remarkable example of the trend of the time toward a deeper religious life is shown in the community at Little Gidding. Nicholas Ferrar (1592-1637), educated in medicine, traveler, efficient manager of the Virginia Company, member of Parliament, left public life in 1624 and retired to a small country estate, Little Gidding, whither he was promptly followed by the other members of his family. This little community of some thirty persons had apparently no intention of forming a religious order or sect; their object was merely to lead a religious life in accordance with the principles of the Anglican church. As they said, "They had found divers perplexities, distractions and almost utter ruin in their callings; if others knew what comfort God had ministered unto them since their sequestration they might take like course." Naturally such an institution caused many comments, and Protestants looked angrily on what they considered an attempt to introduce Catholicism. But visitors and examiners found nothing to which to object. The community aimed at nothing but the organiza-

[1] Evelyn Underhill: *Mysticism*, p. 559.

[2] Edited by Evelyn Underhill, 1912.

[3] Appeared as *Sancta Sophia. Or Direction for the prayer of contemplation*, Douay, 1657. Also *The Holy Practices of a Devine Lover or the Sainctly Ideots Devotions*, Paris, 1657.

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tion of a family life on the basis of putting devotion in the first place of practical duties. Ferrar was not even desirous of doing much literary work, but contented himself with framing a harmony of the Gospels and of the history of the books of Kings and Chronicles. The slight influence of the community, which was broken up shortly after the death of Ferrar, was toward a deepening of the religious life of the time. It had otherwise no connection with the mystical forces which we are considering.[1]

Utterly distinct from the various mystical influences already discussed, yet springing from the same fountain-head and similarly expressive of the general feeling of religious unrest and uncertainty was the Cambridge Platonic school. Henry More (1614-1687), in whose writings the most distinctive traits are best shown, read Proclus and Plotinus; Dionysius the Areopagite was one of his dearest friends; he was steeped in the sincere mysticism of the *Theologia Germanica*. His school was purely intellectual in character, it sought no followers, it formed no sect; in later days it even led men back to the Established Church as to a refuge; yet in spite of this, its teachings helped to swell the tide of opposition to religion at second-hand, to forms and ceremonies, to a clergy skilled only in affairs of the intellect and not of the heart and soul.

We have spoken of John Everard as the pioneer of quietistic mysticism in England. He was, however, more than a mystic in his appeal to thinkers of his time. As the connecting link between mystics and alchemists he represents another great seventeenth-century movement. The intellectual or scientific side of Neoplatonism was represented in England quite as well as the mystical side, and seems in fact

[1] J. H. Shorthouse has told the story of Ferrar in *John Inglesant*. See *Dictionary of National Biography* for biographies of Ferrar.

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to have had an especially popular and widespread vogue in the years between 1640 and 1670. The two interests are so closely associated that there often seems no line of demarcation whatever. In Everard's translation of the *Pymander of Hermes*[1] lies the evidence that the quest for the philosopher's stone was not in his time entirely the material demand that later years have found in it, but rather another expression of the ever present quest for the spiritual and mystical facts of life. From the time of the appearance in England of the writings of Robert Fludd (1574-1637) the interest in alchemy had increased enormously. Fludd was a devoted and outspoken follower of Paracelsus, less original perhaps than his master, but more methodical, and like him a chemist-physician and prolific writer. His apology for the Rosicrucians[2] seems to have been the signal for the appearance in England of a strange literature, devotional and quietistic, theosophical and cabalistic, mystical and alchemistic. Typical of the two extremes of Neoplatonism are the many translations and reprints of *The Imitation of Christ*[3] and the reprints, a little later, of Cornelius Agrippa,[4] and the tracts which have

[1] *The Divine Pymander of Hermes Mercurius Trismegistos in XVII Books, Translated formerly, out of the Arabick into Greek, and thence into Latine, and Dutch, and now out of the original into English by that learned Divine Dr. Everard,* London, 1650.

[2] *Apologia Compendiaria Fraternitatem de Rosencruce suspicionis . . . maculis aspersum,* Leyden, 1616.

[3] Thomas à Kempis: *The Imitation of Christ,* London. H. Denham. No date.—Another edition, London, 1568; another edition, Thomas Rogers, London, 1596.—A book called *A litle Garden of Roses or holy Meditations* written first in Latyn by Thomas à Kempis, and translated into English by A. H., London. H. Blunden, 1640.—Edited by John Worthington, 1677.—Under title *The Christian's Pattern,* 1684: *The following of Christ,* 1685.

[4] *Three Books of Occult Philosophy . . . by Cornelius Agrippa.* Translated by J. F., 1650: *The Glory of Women by . . . Agrippa.*

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come down to us associated with the name of Hermes. Along with many reprints and partial elucidations of earlier English alchemists, such as those of Thomas Vaughan (1622-1666) and the famous antiquarian Elias Ashmole (1617-1692), were published also translations of Paracelsus.[1] At least two treatises of Valentin Weigel's appeared in English [2] and there is later mention even of Paracelsians and Weigelians [3] as English sects. Henry More, like John Everard, was interested in all phases of Neoplatonism. More proclaimed adherence to the principle of a "light within" as the ultimate test of religious truth; he read Hermes Trismegistos and Marsilius Ficinus [4]; his *Conjectura Cabbalistica* (1653) [5] gives evidence of his strong

Translated by Edward Fleetwood, 1652; *Agrippa—fourth book.* Translated by Robert Turner, 1655.

[1] There are at least six treatises of Paracelsus in the Thomason Tracts, published between 1650 and 1657. In *Works of Geber, the famous Arabian prince and philosopher.* Englished by Richard Russel, Lover of Chymistry, London, 1678. P. 3 (to reader): "For besides the large volume of the works of Raymund Lully, I have Englished the greater part of the works of Paracelsus."

[2] Valentine Weigelius: *Astrologia Theologized. Wherein is set forth what Astrologia and the light of nature is* . . . London, 1649. At the end of *Life and Death of Mr. John Cotton,* London, 1658, is a catalogue of some books printed by Lodowick Lloyd containing *Resignation or Self Denial by Valentine Wigelius.*

[3] Richard Baxter: *One Shot against the Quakers,* London, 1657, pp. 1-13. Also in his *Second Sheet for the Ministry,* etc., same year, p. 12. "The Anabaptists, Socinians, Swenkfeldians, Familists, Paracelsians, Weigelians, and such like have no more to show for their ministry than we, but their errors, and are so few and so lately sprung up, that of them also I may say, that he that taketh them for the holy church, or ministers, is either out of the faith, or much out of his wits."

[4] John Tulloch: *Rational Theology in England in the Seventeenth Century,* London, 1872, II, pp. 309-61.

[5] *Conjectura Cabbalistica, or attempt to interpret the Three first Chapters of Genesis in a threefold manner—literal, philosophical and mystical or divinely moral,* London, 1653.

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leaning toward spiritual alchemy; and his sympathy with Joseph Glanvil in the belief in witchcraft and apparitions shows that even these most degenerate resultants of faith in the unity of all life were still active agencies even among the learned. In its passionate quest for truth the seventeenth century did not discriminate. It made no distinctions. It drew no line between (1) theosophy, or religious and ethical teaching, (2) alchemy, or the relation of the material to the spiritual and the transmutation of the material into the spiritual, and (3) magic, or the employment upon the physical plane of the higher powers latent in man. To find a clear-cut division between these three elements is always difficult enough, but never more so than in the writings of this period. The beliefs of the time were equally confused. As the religious interest increased, and with it the confidence in the power of the "inner light," the belief in the ability to use this force in the physical world increased likewise; on the other hand, the attempts to transmute material into spiritual energy could lead men only to a deeper belief in that spiritual energy. Religious life came nearer and nearer to the enthusiastic stage. In the same degree those great progressive, reformatory desires of the time increased, desires for reforms ecclesiastical, educational, and social, ambitions for greater material comfort and advancement for the many instead of only for the few,—in fact, the whole Rosicrucian, Utopian ideal.

As a result of this widespread spiritual interest, this demand for a broader life, this belief in present inspiration and revelation, an utter dependence upon the guiding power of the "inner light" became the impelling motive of Independency as early as the year 1644. In the powerful emotions of the times, in the stormy excitement of civil war, these beliefs called forth a religion of prophecy.

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"Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks: methinks I see her as an eagle renewing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full midday beam; purging and unsealing her long-abused sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance; while the whole noise of timorous and flocking birds, with those also that love the twilight, flutter about, amazed at what she means, and in their envious gabble would prognosticate a year of sects and schisms."[1] Thus were the times characterized by one who stood in the front rank of their enthusiastic supporters. Under these stormy victories the Independents grew ever stronger. They began to call themselves "The kingdom of Christ's saints" in 1644, and were popularly spoken of as "the saints," particularly after the triumph of Cromwell's army. Thus their faith enlarged to a widespread general feeling of inspiration.

An enlarging, expanding power, a constructive, spiritual energy comes in times of great stress to certain persons, making them sure of their alliance with a Being who guarantees the ultimate goodness of the world. The influence of unconscious suggestion from social environment is present in this experience and impresses upon it a temporal aspect. The actual mystical views of any given period, the symbolism through which these inward experiences are expressed, the revelations which come to spiritual prophets, all bear the mark and color of the age in question. But the reformatory power and historical significance of these beliefs and revelations are attained, not through the separated few as individuals, but through the few as representatives of great groups of people who have the will and the power to take a real part in the development of public

[1] Milton: *Areopagitica.* Prose Works, II, p. 94.

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life. One proof for the general demand of the seventeenth century for inspiration lies in *Pilgrim's Progress.* The history of Bunyan's spiritual life is typical of all the men of that great period who belonged to the movement producing Cromwell's "Ironsides." Through bitter struggles of soul these men had come; they must make their "calling and election" sure. They had visions and heard voices divinely expressive of the great tasks before them in a world-historic epoch, which they interpreted as belonging to a premillennial time. In all places, and particularly after the outbreak of the civil war, there were these apostles of freedom and enthusiasm, "seeing visions and dreaming dreams."

According to the general polemic method of the age every differing opinion was considered not only a heresy but also as the foundation of a new sect. "The Independent partie grows, but the Anabaptists more, and the Antinomians most,"[1] writes Baillie. And later, "Most of the Independent partie are fallen off to Anabaptisme, Antinomianisme and Socinianisme; the rest are cutted among themselves."[2] The home of Anabaptism remained in Holland. In 1643 the Anabaptists published their articles of faith and began flooding England with pamphlets demanding liberty of conscience for all sects. At this time they were merely opposed to infant baptism without insisting upon a second or adult submission to the ceremony and were but slightly at variance with the other sects. The missionaries who came over at the beginning of the civil war differed only in name, not in practice, from the "saints." Independency represented and included all the views which animated the enthusiasts, and, if there were separate meetings for the dif-

[1] Baillie: *Letters,* II, p. 117.
[2] Baillie: *Letters,* II, p. 191.

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ferent so-called sects, this resulted from some personal choice and not from a necessity arising from differing beliefs. In spite of the many eccentric forms that the teachings of Independency take, they all hold the one central idea which always accompanies "enthusiasm": the demand for reliance upon the "inner light," the origin of the religious life which knows no earthly history. The general talk of the time of a "chaos of sects" rested upon a misunderstanding.[1] Pagitt mentions fourteen different sects of Anabaptists alone,[2] in addition to all the other various sects. But he might justly include them all under his "Enthusiasts, who pretend that they have the gift of prophecy by dreams to which they give much credit."[3] He even speaks of the sect of Divorcers founded by "Mr. Milton, who permits a man to put away his wife upon his own pleasure, without any fault in her, but for any dislike or disparity in nature." Thomas Edwards refers "the errors, heresies, blasphemies to sixteen heads or sorts of Sectaries. Yet of that Army, called by the Sectaries, Independent, and of that part of it which truly is so, I do not think there are fifty pure Independents, but higher flown, more seraphicall (as a Chaplain who knows well the state of that Army, expressed it) made up and compounded of Anabaptisme, Antinomianisme, Enthusiasme, Arminianisme, Familisme, all these errors and more too sometimes meeting in the same persons . . . in one word, the great Religion of that sort of men in the Army, is liberty of conscience and liberty of preaching."[4]

Thus religion in seventeenth-century England reached the stage of enthusiasm. Any writings catering to any de-

[1] Weingarten, p. 109.
[2] Pagitt: *Heresiography*, p. 35.
[3] Pagitt: *Heresiography*, p. 36.
[4] Thomas Edwards: *Gangraena*, London, 1643, I, p. 13.

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sire to transcend the ordinary bounds of human life might properly expect to find printers and publishers, readers and public eager and expectant, and such writings would come in answer to the ever-increasing demand.

In a soil thus receptive to all Neoplatonic thought and feeling, the seeds of Boehmenistic teaching might be expected to thrive. At the beginning of the great sect-forming period, the works of Boehme began to appear in London.[1] Between 1644 and 1662 his complete works were published in English, sometimes two or more at a time, sometimes singly. Their spread, moreover, was not confined to printed works alone; in England as on the continent they passed in MS. from hand to hand. Part of the works appeared in Latin; all of them had appeared in Dutch. Often the Dutch edition had preceded the German edition; both were usually printed in Amsterdam. Occasionally even the English edition preceded the German, as in the case of the *Forty Questions* and the *Clavis*. Most of the English translations were made and published by John Sparrow (1615-1665), a London advocate who had been an officer in Cromwell's army. A relative of Sparrow's, John Ellistone, and a printer, Humphrey Blunden, who learned German for the purpose, finished the translation. The books were sold openly by Blunden and a man named Lodowick Lloyd in their stores near the London Exchange.[2]

[1] See Bibliography for complete list of works with dates of publication, translation, etc.

[2] A. W. Boehme: *Reformation der Kirche in England*, p. 924.

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III

BOEHME IN ENGLAND

THE interest in Boehme in England after 1644 soon became widespread, and extended in many directions. It can be traced in the religious, political, scientific, and literary life of the time. In the case of the religious interest, the relationship was at first hand and acknowledgment was frequently made to Boehme's writings. The political situation shows some degree of similarity: certain sects in which Boehme's teachings were one of the formative influences became for a time political rather than religious factors. In literature and science, acknowledgment was made less openly. To profess an interest in books that were read by enthusiasts and sectarians was, to say the least, not consistent with dignity. Between poor sectarians and men of rank and social importance there was little or no friendliness until the time of the hard-won sympathy toward a few Quakers, more than ten years after Boehme's writings began to be known.

The first printed mention in England of Jakob Boehme is the anonymous "Life" published in 1644: *The Life of one Jacob Boehme: who although he were a Very Meane man, yet wrote the most Wonderfull deepe Knowledge in Naturall and Divine Things that any hath been knowne to doe since the Apostles Times; wherein is contained a perfect catalogue of his works.* London. Printed by L. N. for Richard Whitaker. 1644.—The mode of appearance of Boehme's works in England followed closely that in Ger-

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many and Holland, where learned men were the first to embrace his teachings and disseminate his writings. These writings likewise spread abroad and were widely read in manuscript, in England as on the continent. In the British Museum is a translation evidently of part of the *Mysterium Magnum* (not published until 1654), a beautifully written manuscript of 223 folios, dated 1644.[1] There exists also a beautiful, carefully bound manuscript copy of the *Way to Christ,* dated 1647.[2] This was printed in 1648, a second edition in 1656. This collection of short tracts Ritschl considered the most generally popular of Boehme's writings. In July, 1853, a contributor to *Notes and Queries,*[3] asking for information regarding Boehme, states that he possesses manuscript copies in English of *Theosophic Letters, Way to Christ, Concerning the Earthly and the Heavenly Mystery,* and *Of the Supersensual Life.*

Various facts regarding Boehme and the spread of his writings in England come out in Sparrow's prefaces. In his "To the English Reader," in the *Election of Grace, or Predestination,* Sparrow holds that "the Author Disputes not at all, he desires only to Confer and Offer his understanding and ground of Interpreting the Texts on Both sides, . . . for the Conjoyning, Uniting and Recon-

[1] Harleian MS. 1821: "The most remarkable History of Joseph. Mystically expounded and interpreted according as it is layd downe in ye Holy Scripture: Beginning at ye 36th Chapter of Genesis and continuing to ye end of ye booke. Wherein is represented and pourtrayed The exact and lively patterne of a True Resigned Christian, together with the whole processe of a Regenerate man according to the mystery of the new Birth in Christ, both in his Tryall and Perseverance and also in his honour and exaltacon. Written by Jacob Boehme Teutonicus. Translated out of the German Toungue A.D. 1644."

[2] Kindly lent me by Dr. S. P. Sherman, University of Illinois.

[3] *Notes and Queries,* 1st series, VIII, p. 13.

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ciling of all Parties in Love." Sparrow emphasizes our need of the "inner light" and rejoices "that God hath bestowed so great a Gift and Endowment upon this Brother of Ours, Jacob Behm."[1] In the preface to the *Three Principles,* Sparrow mentions the benefits that may be expected from the study of Boehme's writings. As a lawyer, the first thing Sparrow notes and mentions is: "among the rest there is a hint about reforming the laws, by degrees, in every nation; and there is no doubt, but if those in whose hands it is to make laws, did but consider what the Spirit of God is, and may be stirred up in them, they would stir him up and make a reformation according to that spirit of love, the Holy Ghost. And then they would be God's true vicegerants; they would be the fathers of their country, and deal with every obstinate rebellious member in the kingdom as a father would do with a disobedient child. . . . God taketh such care for us all, though we be most obstinate enemies against him; and we should do so for all our brethren, the sons of Adam; though they be our enemies, we should examine their wants and supply them, that necessity may not compel them to be our enemies still, and offend God, that they may but live. If they will . . . turn murderers, let them be provided for as other more friendly children of the Commonwealth, and removed to live by themselves, in some remote uninhabited country . . . with means for an honest subsistence. . . . Then all hearts will bless the hands of such reformers and love will cover all the ends of the earth."[2] In his preface to his second edition of the *Forty Questions,* 1665, Sparrow tells us: "When this book was first printed (1647) I endeavored, by a friend, to present one of them to His Majesty King

[1] *Election of Grace, or Predestination,* London, 1655.
[2] C. J. Barker's edition of *Three Principles,* XVI, XVII.

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Charles, that then was, who vouchsafed the perusal of it. About a month after was desired to say what he thought of the book, who answered, that if the publishers in English seemed to say of the author, that he was no scholar, and if he were not, he did believe that the Holy Ghost was now in men, but if he were a scholar, it was one of the best inventions that ever he read. I need not add the censure of any other person; knowing none to compare with this, one way or other." [1]

Sparrow's first translations were *Forty Questions* and the *Clavis,* published in 1647. The year before a public discourse on Boehme had been held by Charles Hotham "in the publicke Schooles of the University of Cambridge at the Commencement, March 3, 1646." Charles Hotham (1615-*c.* 1672) was one of the earliest of Boehme's learned admirers. He received his degree at Cambridge, was appointed fellow of Peterhouse, 1644, university preacher and proctor, 1646. He was regarded as a man of very great eminence in learning and strictness in religion and conduct. In his younger days he studied astrology and afterwards had a love for chemistry and was a searcher into the secrets of nature. In 1667 he became a member of the Royal Society. The discourse on Boehme, *Ad Philosophiam Teutonicam Manductio,* was published in 1648 by Humphrey Blunden. It was dedicated to the chancellor, senate, and students of Cambridge, and contained some verses by Henry More, commending the author but professing ignorance regarding Boehme due to the difficult language and style of his writings. In 1650 the pamphlet appeared in an English translation by Charles's brother Durant Hotham.[2]

[1] C. J. Barker's edition of *Forty Questions,* XVI, XVII.

[2] *An Introduction to the Teutonick Philosophie.* Being a de-

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In his "Epistle Dedicatory" to the pamphlet, Charles Hotham shows that he is reading Boehme the philosopher and scientist rather than Boehme the mystic or religious reformer: "Whatsoever the Thrice-great Hermes deliver'd as Oracles from his Propheticall Tripos, or Pythagoras spake by authority, or Socrates debated, or Aristotle affirmed, yea, whatever divine Plato prophesied, or Plotinus proved; this, and all this, or a far higher and profounder Philosophy is (I think) contained in the Teutonicks writings." He seemed also to believe[1] that an abiding interest in Boehme had been started in Cambridge: "I doubt not but the height of what I have promised will be abundantly performed by the Authors Book of the Three Principles, which as I am informed, is now at schoole, and will in a few months be taught in our language."

Durant Hotham's note "from the translator to the Author" probably represents the feeling of many of his contemporaries: "Translations are things very difficult, especially when the notion is uncouth. Yet hath this been my chiefe inducement to adventure upon this assay; my aim being to make the notion familiar, by transplanting into our native soile . . . in truth it is very hard to write good English and few have attained to its height in this last frie of Books, but Mr. Milton. As to the matter and author of the Teutonick Philosophy, which you here abbreviate; though you know I alwaies affected it and him, yet durst never saile into the ocean of his vast conceits with my little skull, me thought the reading of him was like the

termination concerning the Original of the Soul: viz, Whether it be immediately created by God, and infus'd into the Body; or transmitted from the Parent. By C. Hotham, one of the Fellows of Peter-House. . . . Englished by D. F. London. Printed by T. M. and A. C. for Nath. Brooks, 1650.

[1] End of Dedicatory Epistle.

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standing upon a precipice or by a cannon shott off, the waft of them lickt up all my brains. I confess your introductio hath made me something more steady and his notions more familiar and I have found some inkling of them in scripture, so have shaken hands with less suspicion. . . . In my opinion whoever reads this scheme of the world's creation, and birth of the soul may make excellent use of it, receiving his noble descent from these eternal essences, and shame to bemire himself in that swinelike refreshment and wallowing in cold dirty mire."

Durant Hotham became a justice of the peace. For many years he lived in Yorkshire, engaged in scientific pursuits. In 1654 he published a life of Boehme for which Humphrey Blunden furnished him the material. We shall find him later in friendly agreement with George Fox and his teachings.

This interest in Boehme as a scientist and natural philosopher comes out also in one of Sparrow's prefaces. He writes " To the Earnest Lovers of Wisdome: [1] Learned men, Selden, Sir Francis Bacon, Comenius, Pellius, Du Chartes . . . these, and some others in their kind have gone as farre, as the naturall facultie of man's outward reason can reach; this author Jacob Behmen esteemeth not only his owne outward reason, but acknowledgeth to have received a higher gift from God, freely bestowed upon him, and left it in writing, for the good of those that should live after him. . . . In his writings he hath discovered such a Ground and such Principles, *as doe reach into the deepest mysteries of Nature,* and lead to the attaining of the highest powerful naturall wisdome, such as was amongst the ancient philosophers, Hermes Trismegistos, Zoroaster, Pythagoras, Plato, and other deep men, conversant in the operative

[1] *Forty Questions,* 1647.

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mysteries of nature; and the moderne Trevisanus, Raymundus, Lullius, Paracelsus, Sendivogius and others; by which men will be satisfied, that not only they have gotten, but that wee also may get that Lapis Philosophorum the Philosopher's stone indeed. . . . By the study of these writings, men may come to know . . . how all the reall differences of opinions, of all sorts, may be reconciled; even the nicest differences of the most learned Criticks in all ages: that which seemeth different in the writings of the profound magicall mysticall chimick Philosophers, from that which we find in the experimentall Physicians, Astronomers, Astrologers and Mathematicians may be reconciled by considering what this author teacheth."

Neither Sparrow nor the Hothams were sectarians. Sparrow[1] resorted to mysticism as a refuge from the sectarian religions of his time; Charles and Durant Hotham were orthodox churchmen. The spread in England of Neoplatonic ideas was not at all confined to the confessedly religious sects. The fundamental thoughts of Independency, the origin and development of which are sketched in the preceding chapter, were closely related to those of the free societies or academies of the seventeenth century. In fact so nearly identical are the ideals of the sects and of the free societies that at times it is exceedingly difficult to distinguish between the two forms of organization. They

[1] There is evidence to show that Hartlib was acquainted with Sparrow. May 19, 1659, Hartlib wrote to Boyle: "This day parliament past an act for constituting John Sadler, John Sparrow and Samuel Moyer judges for probate of wills." (Works of Boyle, Vol. VI, p. 126.) The *Dictionary of National Biography* states that in 1659 "John Sadler, Taylor, Whitelock and others were appointed judges for probate of wills" (article on Sadler). Hartlib knew Sadler; full of detail and news as his letters are, it is doubtful if he would mention facts about mere names that held no interest for himself or the recipient of his news.

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wrought toward the same end. "Humanism on the one hand and Anabaptism on the other have contributed," says Troeltsch,[1] "in the realms of ethics and human rights, more than the older Protestantism to the formation of the modern world."

The word "humanism" took its origin in antiquity and meant then the purely human, or the ideal humanity to which mankind might be educated. When in the church of the Middle Ages the depravity of human nature since Adam became the dominant teaching, the belief in this humanistic ideal became officially impossible. Yet we have seen how the belief lived on and how it was fostered by continued organized activity which leads from the teachings of Plotinus by way of the Neoplatonic academies, by way of the mystics and heretics, to the brotherhoods and academies of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

In England in 1645 an academy, the "invisible college" or Academia Londoniensis was founded by Theodor Haak, a German who studied in Oxford and Cambridge in 1625, and returned to England in 1629 after a few years spent on the continent. Haak was a public-spirited man, zealous for the progress of all learning, a friend of Comenius. There is evidence also of other "free societies" in England about this time.[2] It was the society founded by Haak, however, that at the time of the Restoration (1660) was chartered by Charles II as the "Royal Society."

Under Cromwell's protection the members of the London Academy were not obliged to conceal their purpose absolutely. Nevertheless a great deal of obscurity still surrounds the "invisible college," or "collegium philosophicum," as it

[1] "Bedeutung des Protestantismus für die Entstehung der Modernen Welt." Quoted, *M. C. G.*, XV, p. 265.
[2] *M. C. G.*, XVI, p. 244.

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was also called. Many of the members are known to us as personal friends of Milton. Samuel Hartlib, who came to London in 1628, was surely known to Milton as early as 1644. In the correspondence between Hartlib and Robert Boyle Milton's name is mentioned several times. Through Boyle's nephew Richard Jones, Earl of Ranelagh—one of Milton's pupils—the poet's acquaintance with Heinrich Oldenburg of Bremen took on a deeper personal interest. Oldenburg was also father-in-law of John Dury, likewise a member of the "invisible college," a friend of Milton, and also one of Hartlib's early friends.

The ideals and plans of the "college" and its close relation to similar societies on the continent—a relation shown by the recurring mention of the names of continental leaders —are well outlined in Hartlib's correspondence, which was carried on not only with all the countries of Europe, but with the West Indies and the North American English colonies, and dealt with religion, politics, science, literature, schools and universities, useful inventions and social improvements. These ideas are also brought out in Hartlib's various activities; he was "the zealous solicitor of Christian peace amongst all nations, the constant friend of distressed strangers, the true-hearted lover of our native country, the sedulous advancer of ingenius acts and profitable sciences," [1] a man whose activity in spreading knowledge and whose zeal in doing good bore fruit in mitigating the severe pressure of seventeenth-century conditions. It would be impossible to enumerate his various attempts for the mental, moral, and material advancement of society by publication

[1] Dedication to Hartlib in Beale's *Herefordshire Orchards a Pattern for all England*, London, 1657. Quoted, *Worthington's Diary*, I, p. iv.

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and correspondence, by the establishment of institutions, by philanthropic enterprise, public and private.

Whether Hartlib came to England originally as an agent for John Dury in the interest of a union of all Protestant churches is not quite certain.[1] Assuredly he was deeply interested in the project from 1630 on, when Dury came to London. From Dury's "Platform of the Journeys that must be undertaken for the work of Peace Ecclesiastical and other profitable ends,"[2] we can see how far-reaching and inclusive the plans of Hartlib and Dury were. The Platform discusses first the main project of gaining everywhere influential persons to help in the advancement of "Peace in the Churches." It then discusses the minor consideration "as tyme and leisure shall permit to gather and observe severall things of great profitt." The minor considerations of the platform follow:

"Things to be gathered: 1. All rare Bookes. 2. All Inventions and Feats of Practice in all Sciences.—For bookes I will not only cataloguize them, to know their Titles and contents in what Language soever they bee, but also will seeke out how and where they may bee purchased and chiefly, I will lay hold of MS. that we may have either the Autographon or the copy of them. For Inventions and Industries, I will seeke for such chiefly as may advance learning and good manners in the Universities, Schools and Commonweales; next for such as may bee profitable to the health of the body, to the Preservation and Encrease of wealth by trades and mechanical Industries, either by Sea or Land; either in Peace or Warre.

"Things to be observed:

"1. The proceedings and Intentions of the Reformators whom this latter time hath brought forth in Germany; that we may [know] the things wherein they are thought to excell former ages and other societies which are these:

(1) Some Extraordinary meanes to perfeit the knowledge and unvail the mysteryes of the Propheticall scriptures.

[1] Althaus: *Samuel Hartlib*, pp. 197-202.

[2] B. M. Sloane MS. 654, ff. 247-49.

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(2) Meanes to perfeit the knowledge of the Orientall tongues and to gaine abilities fitt to deale with the Jewes, whose calling is supposed to be neere at hand.

(3) Arts and Sciences, Philosophicall, Chymicall and Mechanicall; whereby not only the Secrets of Disciplines are harmonically and compendiously delivered, but also *the Secrets of Nature are thought to be unfolded.* . . .

(4) A magical Language whereby secrets may be delivered and preserved to such as are made acquaint with it traditionally. . . .

"2. The State of the Churches in Germany: to know all the Sects, Divisions and Subdivisions of them that profess Christ in those places with their particular and different Opinions, and the Circumstances, Occasions, Causes and Effects of the Controversies, as for example of the Socinians, Anabaptists, Swenkfeldians, Familists, Weigelians, Nagelians and to purchase the chiefe bookes of all their Tenents, and to observe the differences of their Churches, orders and customs serving either for Decence or Discipline."

Boehme and the Behmenists were not known in England until several years after this document was written. If Dury carried out his plan of learning about German sects, he must, in his many years spent in Germany and Holland, have come across the Behmenists just as well as he came across the Weigelians and the Familists. Judging by the fragments that we have of his voluminous correspondence we come to the conclusion that he immediately communicated his knowledge of the Behmenists to Hartlib, his faithful friend and co-worker.

Hartlib's interest in a union of churches does not lead us to expect in him an ardent partisan of any special creed. With the other men of his class he was decidedly opposed to the "riot of sectaries" in England. Nevertheless, he had friends among the Puritans; that he was in sympathy with the Independents in their demand for toleration is shown by one of his publications.[1] Among his

[1] *A short Letter modestly entreating a friend's judgment upon Mr. Edwards his Booke he calleth an Anti-Apologia; with a large*

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friends abroad there were outspoken Separatists. So early as 1650 he corresponded with the Hebrew scholar, Adam Boreel of Amsterdam,[1] who had denied the authority of church and creed and had joined the Dutch sect of Collegiants. The Collegiants, however, believed in the "inner light." In spite of strict adherence to the orthodox faith, Dury shared this belief. In a book published by Hartlib, Dury insists that "the *sufficient* qualification of ministers is the gift of God's Spirit in them," [2] and that "the nearer prospect [of understanding the mysteries of Scripture] is the *inward* testimonie of Jesus who is, to all that believe in him, the immediate wisdom and the power of God." [3] The spirit of Andreae's reformation and Christian college or society is the spirit of Dury's *Seasonable Discourse,* briefly "shewing 1. What the grounds and methods of our Reformation ought to be in Religion and Learning, 2. How even in these times of distraction the worke may be

but modest answer thereto. London, 1644. The "short Letter" signed Sam. Hartlib, is addressed to Hezekiah Woodward, a Puritan, whom Hartlib had known since 1628; Woodward's answer is directed against Edwards, and argues for toleration.

[1] B. M. Sloane MS. 649, f. 40, copy of letter from Hartlib to Boreel, Feb. 8, 1650. Boreel is often mentioned in Hartlib's correspondence with Worthington and with Boyle.

[2] *A Seasonable Discourse.* Written by Mr. John Dury upon the earnest request of many. Published by Samuel Hartlib, London, 1649, p. 5.

[3] *Clavis Apocalyptica; or, the Revelation Revealed.* In which the great Mysteries in the Revelation of St. John and the Prophet Daniel are opened; It being made apparent that the Prophetical numbers come to an end with the Year of our Lord 1655. Written by a German DD and for the rareness of the Subject, and benefit of the English nation translated out of High Dutch. The second edition, much enlarged and many things explained for the capacitie of the weaker sort. London. 1651. Dedicated to Oliver St. John by Samuel Hartlib. An Epistolical Discourse from Mr. John Durie . . . by waie of Preface, p. 24.

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advanced, By the knowledge of Oriental tongues and Jewish mysteries, By an Agency for the advancement of Universal Learning."[1] Before 1636 Dury wrote that he was exceedingly pleased by the *Dextra amoris*.[2] He also wrote Andreae, asking his assistance in the plan of ecclesiastical union.[3]

The correspondence between Hartlib and Comenius had important results; not only did Hartlib publish many of Comenius's writings on educational reform, but he also induced Parliament in 1641 to extend to Comenius an invitation to visit England. The outbreak of the civil war (1649) prevented these two men from carrying out their plans for a general school reform. Comenius, during his six months' stay in London, wrote *Via lucis*, in the eighteenth chapter of which he suggested, as a helpful method for spreading light (knowledge) among all peoples, the founding of a higher and uniform organization which should unite all of the existing societies in the various countries under a new name; he suggested also that the English brotherhood should be placed at the head of the undertaking. "All the colleges, societies, and fraternities,"

[1] From *Seasonable Discourse*, title page. See note 2, p. 68.

[2] B. M. Sloane MS. 417. *Excerpta Literarum de Rebus Ecclesiasticis et Eruditione* anni 1638. Johannis Duraei. (In Hartlib's writing.) f. 3b. "Die Dextra Amoris [Andreae's *Christiani amoris dextra porrecta*, 1620] gefället mir über alle Massen wol, undt scheinet der Author derselben ein man summae pietatis and solidissimi judicii zu sein. Es were nur zu wünschen, dasselbige ihren effect erreichete, oder noch erreichen möchte, so würde gewiss nicht so viel Gottlosigkeit und unchristliches wesen inter ipsos creditos Christianos gefunden werden. Sed non ita bene agitur cum rebus humanis, ut meliora pluribus placeant. Sonst habe ich zufor von dergleichen Collegio niemals gehöret, viel weniger von einem fürsten der solches fürhaben hatte befördern wollen." [Undated. Next heading, f. 21, dated 10 Nov., 1636.]

[3] B. M. Sloane 654, f. 24b. Dated Sept., 1633.

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said he, "which have formerly secretly and openly existed, have been of some assistance, it is true, for theology and philosophy, but only for a part of mankind, not the whole." [1] He wished to call the organization "Collegium lucis" and its members "ministri lucis." It was to be founded on the three sources of knowledge, the book of nature, the Scriptures, and the inborn ideas or inner light; these three sources he called the teachings of Pansophia. After the general reformation of Christendom was effected, the work should be extended to include the Mohammedans, heathen, and Jews. The pamphlet *De rerum humanarum emandatione consultatio catholica ad genus humanum ante alios ad eruditos Europae,* written by Comenius, 1645, was to further this plan for union and progress. Hartlib proceeded to gain the interest of influential men in various places—the *Via lucis* was sent in manuscript to the Swedish Chancellor Oxenstierna and to others—with the intention of finally making public the results. Hartlib thus indicated that secrecy in these societies was not an end in itself but only at times an undesirable means and necessity.

There is evidence of the direct influence of Boehme's writings on the theology of Comenius,[2] in whom the broader humanistic tendencies and mystical religious feeling were closely united. The similar way in which Boehme and Comenius treat nature and inspiration (or inner wisdom)—Sophia in Boehme, Pansophia in Comenius—is at once evident. It is hardly possible that these two men had any personal acquaintance, although Comenius was born in Bohemia and Boehme near the Bohemian frontier; Comenius was only a few years old when Boehme started on his Wanderjahre, the unrecorded period of his life. The Bohemian

[1] *M. C. G.,* IV, pp. 155-57.
[2] *Encyc. Brit.: Comenius.*

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brotherhood—a form of free society of voluntary membership very similar to the academies—of which Comenius was the twentieth and last bishop, conserved (just as the Waldenses had done) the old-Christian tradition and belief.

Since the publication of More's *Utopia,* 1516, ideas of state or world reform, more or less distinctly traceable to Plato's Republic, had flourished among almost all European nations. In 1551 appeared Franciscus Patricius's *La Citta Felice.* After the *Fama Fraternitatis,* 1614 (circulating in manuscript by 1610), came Andreae's *Reipublicae Christianopolitanae descriptio,* 1619, Campanella's[1] *Civitas solis,* 1623, and Bacon's *Nova Atlantis,* 1629. In 1641 Hartlib published his ideal of a state in "A brief description of the famous Kingdom of Macaria, shewing its excellent government, wherein the inhabitants live in great prosperity, health and happiness; the king obeyed, the nobles honoured and all good men respected; vice punished and virtue rewarded. An example to other nations. In a dialogue between a scholar and a traveller. Dedicated to 'The High Court of Parliament.'"

It seems evident that the humanistic idea of world reform was part of the propaganda of English free societies. Just how much they owed to the sister societies on the continent or perhaps even to Andreae, it is difficult to determine. John Dury, the close friend of Haak and Hartlib, knew some of Andreae's writings, as we have seen. Boyle in a letter to Hartlib, March, 1647,[2] says: "Your Imago Societatis and your Dextera Amoris I have great longings to peruse." In the next letter, April, 1647,[3] he writes: "Your Imago Societatis with a great deal of delight I have perused,

[1] Campanella was a member of Accademia Delia in Padua.
[2] Birch: *Life of Boyle,* p. 74.
[3] Birch, p. 75.

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but must beg some leisure to acquaint you with my opinion of it, which now were almost impossible for me to do, I having already presented it to a person of quality with whom if it take suitably to my wishes, it may thence have no obscure influence upon the public good. . . . Campanella's Civitas Solis and that same Republica Christianopolitana . . . will both of them deserve to be taught in our language." Beale, another member of the "invisible college," writes: "I do extremely indulge the design of beginning the Building of Christian societies in small models. . . . 'Tis strange to me, that the model of Christian society and that curious offer of the *right hand of Christian love* hath taken no deeper footing in England."[1] The Dextra amoris, Right hand of Christian love, and Republica Christianopolitana we recognize as Andreae's; the Imago Societatis opens a new question.

In the correspondence of Hartlib with Boyle[2] and with Worthington[3] the terms "utopia," "macaria," "antilia," "nova Atlantis" seem to be used as symbols or names for academies or their plans. Boyle says to Hartlib, May, 1647,[4] "You interest yourself so much in the invisible college, and that whole society is so highly concerned in all the accidents of your life, that you can send me no intelligence of your affairs that does not assume the nature of Utopian." The "utopian correspondence" refers to the activities of the secret societies, but to more than the "invisible college." Hartlib was concerned in a plan for the establishment of another society, more extensive and more

[1] *Worthington's Diary*, I, p. 156. Quoted in Hartlib's letter, July, 1659.

[2] In *Life* by Birch, also in *Boyle's Works*, V.

[3] *Diary and Correspondence of Dr. John Worthington*, ed. by J. Crossby, 1847.

[4] Birch, p. 78.

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ambitious. This society, referred to sometimes as "Marcaria," sometimes as "Antilia," was "to unite the great, the wealthy, the religious, and the philosophical and to form a common center for assisting and promoting all undertakings in the support of which mankind were interested. Every invention conducing to public benefit, every valuable work of literature, every defense of Christianity and endeavor to promote unity among Christians, every charitable foundation lacking assistance, were to be encouraged, refreshed, and upheld from this universal fountain."[1] This plan, to Hartlib's bitter disappointment, finally came to naught, and "the smoke of it was over." Something of its nature and history may be seen in Hartlib's correspondence with Boyle and Worthington, more perhaps in his—as yet unnoted—correspondence with Poleman, which is headed in Hartlib's handwriting "Antilia or German Society. Imago Societatis. Ex lit[teris] Polem[an]. Amst."[2]

Joachim Poleman was a physician of Amsterdam, devotedly attached to Hartlib; if we judge from the number of letters written during a few months—these letters are preserved among Hartlib's papers—Poleman was apparently a very constant correspondent. In May, 1659, Hartlib mentions to Boyle the receipt from Holland of a book on medicine "Novum Lumen Chemicum, sive Medicum Polmanni . . . opening the mystery of the sulphura philosopher (J. B. van Helmont). My son hath read it, and commends it as a most excellent piece for the advancement and amendment of all medical knowledge; he counts also the whole treatise most worthy to be trans-

[1] *Worthington's Diary*, I, p. 163, note.

[2] B. M. Sloane MS. 648, ff. 10-15. Copies by two hands, partly Hartlib's.

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lated."[1] Nov., 1659, Hartlib entreats Boyle "to favour Mr. Poleman with your directions [for a certain medicine] . . . I cannot have a more faithful, careful and otherwise more knowing man, than Mr. Poleman, who, I am confident, doth love me as his own soul."[2]

Poleman's letters speak of a certain German society the development of which was prevented by the war, and of another (which he himself had expected to join) that was broken up by the death of many members.[3] "What do you think," he asks, "of the delineation of such a society under the title Dextra amoris Christiano porrecta or Imago Societatis?"[4] Hartlib's zeal for the public welfare seems to Poleman worthy of great praise. He rejoices in the announcement of Hartlib's new secret society and is pleased beyond measure that his own plans were so exactly like those of the new society, to which he suggests that he send some of his experienced and reliable friends as helpers. The earth, as a result of the proper training of youth, is indeed to become a paradise through a Christian reformation in all ranks and classes; the necessary means (Geldmittel) the society will be able to raise. But how, he inquires anxiously, will the members avoid the suspicion of being mere goldmakers? What pretext will they use to conceal their lofty gift of transmutation? They may well expect trouble and persecution. He asks Hartlib to send him a copy of the plans of the society in full, also a description of its religious ceremonies.[5] Poleman then asks whether he

[1] *Boyle's Works*, V, p. 288.
[2] *Boyle's Works*, V, p. 296.
[3] Sloane 648, f. 11.
[4] "Was aber M. H. [Mein Herr or Magister Hartlib] gedenckt von einer . . . deliniation solcher societät unter dem Titulo Dextra amoris Christiano porrecta wie auch Imago Societatis."
[5] Compare Hartlib to Boyle, Nov., 1659, in *Boyle's Works*, V,

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may tell his best friend Comenius about it. Although he says he is signally unworthy of the honor, he gladly accepts the invitation to join this Antilia.[1]

It seems that the utopian Antilia-Macaria believed that it had the mission to transform the world through proper education of all children from their earliest years and that it also possessed the power to make the gold with which to pave the way for a speedy transformation of that kind. This society appears to be quite distinct from the one planned by Hartlib and Comenius, but a close relation may easily have existed. At any rate, it failed utterly in accomplishing its design. Hartlib died in 1661, and in the

p. 293 . . . "Macaria, whose scope it is most professedly to propagate religion and to endeavor the reform of the whole world."

[1] Sloane 648, f. 12. October 3, 1659. "Auf sein mir sehr angenehmes schreiben vom 9 Sept. fange ich billich meine andtwort an auf M. H. fröliche botschaft einer solchen societät die da so es die Noth des gemeinen besten erforderte, gnugsame goldmittel machen könne, zur ehre Gottes u. erbauung des boni publici . . . Oct. 10 . . . Kan nicht gnug sagen wie hoch der H. mich erfreuet hat mit der confirmation wegen der Societät, u. das dieselbe in kurzten tagen sal herfür thun werde. Aber alles eher erfrewet mich dieses am meisten, dass mein intent mit der societät intention sogar eigentlich übereinkomen. Der M. H. wird vor 8 tagen verstanden haben welch ein herzliches Verlangen ich habe die jugendt in einer rechten ordnung der auferziehung u. information zu bringen, auf dass aus ihnen als aus dem guten saamen hernach tüchige recht geistliche godselige u. godgelehrte männer u. reipublic werden können . . . Ich möchte auch wohl gern vom H. verständiget werden, wie sie ohne suspicion de possessione tinctura Philos. dieses ihr Vorhaben werden können [an] stellig machen, massen ich hierin etliche difficultates besehe, doch werden sie als weisse leute solchen difficultät wohl vorzukommen wissen . . . f. 13. ob sie dem P. anvertrauen werden, durch welche mittle sie solchs vornehmen zu ende werden bringen können: oder was für pretext u. deckel sie gebrauchen wollen, ihre hohe gabe der transmutation zu bedecken u. zu manteln . . . Oct. 17, 1659. Aber der H. sey dieser meiner wenigen worte eingedenck, es wirdt ohne grosse Verfolgung u. trübsaal nicht abgehen."

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meantime part of the "invisible college" had become the Royal Society, with certain circumscribed interests, mainly scientific. The career that Hartlib and the other brothers had worked for, the academy's organized power for social reform, had ended.

And Boehme's relation to this? The gold-making plans of the Antilians were not the schemes of greedy alchemists nor the projects of irresponsible promoters, but the result of an insistent belief that to the pure in heart and the truly charitable the greatest gifts come from a loving God. The secrets of the universal medicine and of the metal-transmuting tincture would be revealed to that man who learned to know God aright.[1] "The smattering I have of the Philosopher's Stone (which is something more than the perfect exaltation of gold)," says Sir Thomas Browne, "hath taught me a great deal of divinity, and instructed my belief how that immortal spirit and incorruptible substance of my soul may lie obscure, and sleep awhile within this house of flesh."[2] This "incorruptible substance" is man's "goldness," a perfect principle revealed by the Christ within ("inner light") —a principle which can be perfected through education. The Antilians, like the spiritual alchemists, were interested most of all in producing the spiritual tincture or philosopher's stone, the mystic seed of transcendental life which should transmute the imperfect self into spiritual gold. For this purpose, Poleman, in *Novum Lumen Chemicum,* a book he sent to Hartlib,[3] recommended the reading of

[1] Compare Hartlib to Boyle, Nov., 1659, in *Boyle's Works,* V, p. 296: "... it will certainly yield both the universal medicine and the tincture: if it should fail, I am assured from others, that Macaria is a real possessor of both these great blessings, but will own neither of them professedly."

[2] *Religio Medici,* pt. i.

[3] See above, p. 73.

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Boehme. This book was published in English, probably at Hartlib's instigation.[1] There is an extract in Hartlib's writing from a letter of Poleman's about Boehme.[2] In his earlier letters Poleman had stated that several of Boehme's works were being printed at Amsterdam by "Beeth" [perhaps Betkius]. He mentioned this to show why he had been unable to find a printer for the *Via veterum sapientum* by Frankenberg, a friend of Hartlib and Poleman.[3]

The study of Boehme and the study of nature on the one hand, and the practice of medicine and of alchemy, spiritual and practical alike, on the other, were closely related in the seventeenth century. A student of Paracelsus was more than likely a student of Boehme as well. One

[1] *Novum lumen medicum*, wherein the excellent and most necessary Doctrine of the highly-gifted Philosopher Helmont concerning the Great Mystery of the Philosopher's Sulphur is fundamentally cleared. By Joachim Poleman. Out of a faithful and good-intent to those that are ignorant and straying from the truth, as also out of compassion to the sick. London, 1662. In his preface Poleman mentions Paracelsus and Basilius Valentinus in addition to Helmont. On pp. 113, 116, 160, 204 he discusses Boehme and recommends him to the seeker after Truth.

[2] B. M. Sloane 648, f. 10. "Ich kann alhier nicht vorbey M H [Magister Hartlib] im vtrauen [vertrauen] zu vermelden, daz ich einmal der Persohn welche gedachte Heimniss [alchemistische Geheimmisse] weis, etliche Paragros [Paragraphos] aus Jacob Böhmens Schriften vom Philosopishen opere furgelesen, welches als er etwas von mir lesen hörete (sintemahl er zwar niemahlen etwas im Böhmen gelesen) hat sich derselbe mir entsetzet u. verwundert sagende.—Ist's möglich daz dieser man solches im geist erkand hat. Er hat die warhaftige warheid geschrieben, den ich solches alles mit meinen sichtlichen augen gesehen habe. Von dieser Persohn auch hoffe ich durch G [Gott] solches Kleinod zu erlangen zu welcher Persohn mich G so wunderlich gefuhret hat, daz es überall mein Verstandt u. Vernunft gehet u. bitte solches H. Clodio [Herrn Frid. Clodius, Hartlib's son-in-law, a physician] zu berichten u. durch ihn der Societät zu vermelden."

[3] B. M. Sloane 648, f. 10.

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of the translators of Paracelsus says in his apology to the reader: "I am not so intent to make my own excuse as to leave thee altogether without a caution: what therefore that most profound Teutonic philosopher Jacob Behmen, somewhere in his writings saith to his reader, that I counsell thee, viz. if thy mind be not spirituall forbear to read these things, for they will doe thee more hurt than good."[1] An alchemist or, rather, a "chymist"—the term was first employed about the middle of the century—was sometimes even called a "Teutonicus," the general name for Boehme.[2]

Further evidence of the connection between Boehme and the English alchemists is adduced by various English works that were recommended for the elucidation of the Teutonic philosopher's writings. Among these were[3] *Magica Adamica*[4] and *Lumen de Lumine*[5] written by Thomas Vaughan (1622-1666) who called himself Eugenius Philalethes. Vaughan was an admirer of Agrippa and Paracelsus, a great "chymist" and experimental philosopher, a Neoplatonist with scientific rather than mystical tendencies. He wrote the preface to the first English translation of the *Fama Fraternitatis* and *Confessio*, 1652, but he roundly contradicted the charge of being a "zealous brother of the Rosie-Crucian fraternity."[6] Vaughan was

[1] *Philosophy Reformed and Improved . . . Oswald Crollius and . . . Paracelsus . . .* translated by H. Pinell. London. 1657. Translator's apology, p. 2.

[2] *Worthington's Diary*, I, p. 195. "Some whisper the King should be a Teutonicus and lover of Chymistry." Letter from Hartlib, June, 1660.

[3] According to A. W. Boehme, p. 923.

[4] *Magica Adamica or the Antiquity of Magic and the Descent thereof from Adam downward, proved*, etc. London, 1650.

[5] *Lumen de Lumine or a new Magical Light discovered and communicated to the world.* London, 1651. Dedicated to Oxford University.

[6] A. E. Waite: *Magical Writings of Thomas Vaughan*, p. viii.

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neither a papist nor a sectarian, but a true resolute churchman.[1] At the time of the plague (1665) he accompanied Sir Robert Murrey to Oxford. Robert Murrey was the first president of the Royal Society before the charter was obtained,[2] and, according to Aubrey, "a good chymist who assisted his Majestie in his chymicall operations."[3]

Elias Ashmole (1617-1692), the great seventeenth-century antiquary and publisher of alchemistic treatises, left among his papers a copy of Boehme's one strictly alchemistic epistle, headed: "Copied [probably by] Dr. Joseph Webbe. Translation of a Dutch letter on the work of tinctures, by Jacob Böhmen an alchemist."[4] In the same collection of papers, among the "miscellaneous remains of Theodoricus Gravius, medical, theological and epistolatory,"[5] there is a rather long discussion of Boehme's doctrine. T. Gravius was rector at Linford, 1641. Among Ashmole's books were copies of several of Boehme's works. Even in the library of a person as temperamentally opposed to mysticism of any kind as Samuel Pepys (1633-1703) were some of Boehme's works. The catalogue entries in his own hand of the *Forty Questions* and the *Three Principles* are still to be seen.[6]

On the side of philosophical and scientific influence Boehme's most noted follower was Isaac Newton (1642-1727). William Law (1687-1762), the great eighteenth-

[1] Wood: *Athenae Oxonienses,* III, pp. 722-25.

[2] Sir William Huggins: *The Royal Society* (Spells Murrey "Moray").

[3] Aubrey: *Brief Lives,* Oxford, 1898, II, p. 82.

[4] Bodleian Library, Ashmole MS. 1499, f. 279. It is a copy of Epistle 33 of the English edition, addressed to Christianus Steenberger, Doctor of Physic.

[5] Bodleian Library, Ashmole MS. 1399, ff. 88-93.

[6] Pepysian Collection 1130, in Magdalene College, Cambridge. Pepys had the two volumes bound together.

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century disciple of Boehme, states in a letter to Dr. Cheyne:[1] "When Sir Isaac Newton died, there were found amongst his papers large abstracts out of J. Behmen's works, written with his own hand. . . . It is evidently plain that all that Sir I. has said of the universality, nature and effects of attraction, of the three first laws of nature, was not only said, but proved in its true and deepest ground, by J. B. in his Three first Properties of Eternal Nature. . . . Sir Isaac was formerly so deep in J. B. that he, together with one Dr. Newton, his relation, set up furnaces, and for several months were at work in quest of the Tincture, purely from what they conceived from him. . . . Sir Isaac did but reduce to a mathematical form the central principles of nature revealed in Behmen." Sir David Brewster, in his biography of Newton, does not deny that Newton was interested in alchemy, although he tries to make light of this interest and especially of Boehme's influence.[2] Brewster seems to overlook the fact that an interest in alchemy and philosophy at that time meant an interest in science and scientific research—the foundation of all modern science. There is evidence that the founder of the so-called modern scientific method, Francis Bacon, as well as most of the early members of the Royal Society, were believers in alchemy and astrology. Among the Newton papers there are many MSS. on alchemy—transcripts from a great variety of authors, named and unnamed. There is no reason for rejecting Law's testimony that some are abstracts from Boehme's works.[3]

[1] *Memorial of Law*, p. 46.

[2] Sir David Brewster: *Life of Sir Isaac Newton*, London, 1875, p. 271.

[3] According to *Notes and Queries*, 8th series, VIII, p. 247, "the papers of Newton relating to Boehme are in Trinity College, Cambridge." I could not find them there. According to the *Catalogue*

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Law also discusses the general scientific influence of Boehme. The same observations which apply to Newton will apply generally, he says, to most of the "philosophical schemes and discoveries of more recent date; among the minor ones, for instance, to the science of physiognomy introduced by Lavater and perfected as phrenology by Drs. Gall and Spurzheim; also to that which is sound in the philosophy of Berkeley [1695-1753], to the delicate and well-grounded, though difficult science of homeopathy of Hahnemann, who studied the principles of J. B. (as more particularly described in his Signatura Rerum) . . . All these individuals were students of Behmen, and many others of the savans of Germany and England both dead and living." [1]

The affinity between Boehme and the students of alchemy, as a result of the great revival of interest in alchemy, was exceedingly close; important, too, was Boehme's general relation to the academies and their teachings. Although he may not even have known of the existence of the academies, he must in a certain sense be considered the developer and systematizer of their beliefs. He laid the philosophical foundation for what they were already attempting to put into practice. Parts of his first work, the *Aurora* and the *Three Principles,* were written in 1612; after that he wrote no more until 1618. In the meantime the Rosicrucian movement started. As representatives of the humanistic spirit, the true Rosicrucians were not distin-

of the Portsmouth Collection of books and papers written by or belonging to Sir Isaac Newton, Cambridge, 1888, some of Newton's papers (notably those on mathematics) were given to the University Library, Cambridge. Those on theology, chronology, history, and alchemy were returned to Lord Portsmouth at Hurstbourne.

[1] *Memorial of Law,* p. 3.

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guishable from the members of the acadamies. Expressive of this movement was the great spread of ideas of world reform, of methods of getting at the secrets of nature, of advance in the sciences of medicine and alchemy. Such ideas filled the minds of people of all classes. By expounding the true nature of man, Boehme laid a foundation for social reform; the body of his writings is an exposition of the inner workings of nature; and in the *Four Complexions* as well as in other works there are explanations, far in advance of the general knowledge of his time, of the temperamental origin of disease. His decided preference for the one great church invisible, as opposed to the "churches of stone" with their unenlightened clergy, is a theoretical expression of Dury's practical attempts to form a union of all Protestant churches. Every one of Boehme's books is a protest against the dry scholastic method of teaching; like Comenius he depends on three sources of knowledge—nature, the Bible, and inspiration. Under his doctrines of free-will and freedom of conscience, he would extend the possibility of salvation to Mohammedans, Heathens, and Jews. Boehme's attitude toward the pretended alchemist was that of contempt, exactly the attitude of the man who really was filled with the spirit of Andreae's teachings, toward the man who boasted himself a Rosicrucian. The spirit of restless longing and dissatisfaction of the early seventeenth century, a spirit that found expression in the plans for world reform and in the Rosicrucian dreams of fraternity, was also mirrored in Jakob Boehme's writings. Mystical Christianity, a search for the hidden secrets of nature, a belief in man as the microcosm, in harmony with God—these thoughts found in one group of writings would lead inevitably to an interest in the other group.

Closely related, from early Reformation times, to the at-

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tempts of mysticism and magic to solve the problems of spiritual progress was the effort to find the key to the apocalyptic prophecies. Cromwell's Ironsides and the "Saints" believed that they were ushering in the millennium. Books and tracts set the exact date for this turn in the affairs of men. Interest in alchemy seems especially to have been accompanied by this interest in prophecy. Hartlib represents the interests of most of the men of his group in his *Chymical Addresses,*[1] also in his publication of the anonymous *Clavis Apocalyptica.*[2] His correspondence with Joseph Mede, Milton's Cambridge tutor, is full of reference to Biblical prophecy fulfilled and to be fulfilled.[3] A number of Hartlib's letters to Worthington show an interest in Boehme's ideas. Nov. 20, 1655, he writes: "The book which I received, when once you were at my house, written by one Felgenhauer under the name of Postillion, is now extant in English with a catalogue of all Books of this Author, that are printed and not printed."[4]

Paul Felgenhauer was a devout student of Boehme. His works read like free paraphrases of his master, in which, it must be confessed, he has done little to make clearer the statements of the Teutonic philosopher. The catalogue of the English translations that Hartlib mentions shows that

[1] *Chymical, Medicinal, and Chyrurgical Addresses:* Made to Samuel Hartlib Esquire. London, 1655. About medicines, surgical measures, the philosopher's stone, etc.

[2] See above note 3, p. 68.

[3] Joseph Mede also wrote a *Clavis Apocalyptica,* not to be confused with the publication by Hartlib of a work of the same title. See *Works of Joseph Mede,* London, 1672.

[4] *Postilion or a New Almanacke and Astrological prophetical Prognostication.* Calculated for the whole world, and all Creatures, and what the Issue or Event will be of the English Warres, etc. . . . Written in High Dutch by Paulus Felghenore, and now translated into English in the year 1655. London, 1655.

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a number of the works have either the same titles or ones very similar to some of Boehme's works, for instance, *Aurora Sapientiae,* published in 1628, and *Mysterium Magnum or the Great Mystery of Christ and His Church,* published in 1651. These works were also circulated in England in MS.,[1] sometimes under the pseudonym Angelus Marianus. Felgenhauer's works were sometimes confused with those of Boehme.[2]

Another writer who combined the interest in alchemy and apocalyptic prophecy was Abraham von Frankenberg (1593-1652). This Silesian nobleman, dissatisfied with the letter-service of the clergy and its helplessness in bettering the condition of mankind, eagerly accepted the teachings of Tauler and à Kempis, then of Schwenkfeld and Weigel, and finally those of Jakob Boehme. Frankenberg became, in fact, a personal friend of the shoemaker-philosopher, and to him one of Boehme's *Epistles* is addressed. The *Life of Boehme* in the Amsterdam edition of his works was written by Frankenberg. He is generally regarded as one of Boehme's best-known friends and admirers.[3] He wrote also under the name of Amadeus von Friedleben. His treatises on practical mysticism, the life of man ruled by the "inner word," are frankly alchemistic in tone; he quotes Paracelsus and the scientific Neoplatonists as freely as he

[1] British Museum, Sloane MS. 1304 is a translation apparently of four of his shorter treatises. Sloane MS. 728 is *The book of Jehi,* which was published in 1640. A MS. note on the front page says: "this manuscript I take to be parte of Ja. Boehmen workes translated." The Bodleian has Ashmole MS. 417, IV: *Aurora Sapientiae.*

[2] *Universal Lexicon aller Wissenschaften u. Künste.* Halle und Leipzig, 1733. Article, "Boehme."

[3] Colberg: *Hermetisches Christentum,* p. 326—J. A. Calo: *de Vita Jacobi Boehmii.* Wittenberg, 1707. Caput IV. Both of these books give a list of Frankenberg's works.

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does the mystics. His *Raphael*[1] is a treatise on spiritual alchemy, infused with the spirit and teachings of Boehme. In his *Via veterum sapientum*[2] he quotes from Andreae's *Menippus, Mythologia Christiana.*

As early as 1646 Frankenberg[3] had been a friend of

[1] Published Amsterdam, 1676, by Betkius.
[2] Published Amsterdam, 1675, by Betkius. See p. 86.
[3] Sloane MS. 648, ff. 89-90.
(Letter from Abraham von Frankenberg to Samuel Hartlib. In Latin.)

Health and Happiness!

This year which now hastens on I was writing to Thee, most excellent man, through thy kinsman George, with some small suitable literary gifts, but as I hear that that offering yielded to rapine at Dunkirk the matter must be entered into a second time. Behold, therefore, my most favourable Hartlib, some mystic pledge of our dear friendship, the EYE and KEY: by which things I desire to open fully to thee, most desirable of friends, the thoughts of my mind. Simplicity and straightforwardness are the witnesses of love and uprightness, and thus we come to the inner house. Truly there have been present other consolations of our inclinations and affections, but the means of presenting these before the public are lacking. And this my left EYE, by many not sufficiently admitted of the right, perchance seems to be in darkness to those who, although themselves overspread by a cataract, put forward more obscure rather than clearer matters. Of the KEY, whatever Theologians are about to think it matters not. This I know that the eyes and the ears of the common herd cannot discern or tolerate the light and the word of wisdom and the truth of hidden things. And since one teaches that wisdom is by far the most central and universal thing, it is not wonderful that the lowly and plebeian should not understand or grasp such things because they neglect them and are ignorant. Therefore let him understand who can, let him carp who will, it is all the same to me. For I know in what I believed and by what I wrote. To the good all things are well, and even in good is some evil; to the evil nothing is good, even the best. However, I strive neither for myself nor mine by these things, although I seek food or clothing, I have it not during my six year exile. And now I am a wandering star and a lounger, that is I live from another's table. Verily I had thought to gain something of a provision for my people by little writings of this kind,

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Hartlib. He contributed to Hartlib's collection of papers on educational reform.[1] In 1655 Hartlib tried to find a publisher in England for Frankenberg's *Oculus Sydereus,*

or rather to conciliate my patrons; but Fate and Desire go not on equal foot!

Yet some there were, although poor, who esteemed these things good, among whom Dn. Comenius and Dn. Hevelius not at all the least.

"He makes his living by robbery who has mind without light, but if he is happy in his patron he lives by his genius."

Thou, most dear man, will accept these things rightly and will not deem me unworthy of thy favour and patronage (if perchance the occasion occur). For if my divine EYE, to use the Latin idiom, should give light to any one at all, it will be freely allowed to him by me in any way in which the thoughts of the mind find expression. Wherefore, I have especially destined for thee a copy, one out of Three, properly corrected with margins added. Do with it whatever seems good and pleasing for the use of the Christian state. Moreover I am giving birth to another production, the mystic name of which I had assigned before I was in this country, but I do not yet know to whom I may commit the care of producing the same before the public or how it will be done, since I suspect evil. The pamphlet five with the fourfold and geometrical figures will not be unwelcome or useless to thee and, by thee, to those similarly cultured in universal knowledge.

My "little kindred sons" which remain are:—

(1) Eusebius' wisdom or "Viam veterum sapientum."

(2) Saphir's "Elem. de Numerorum" as far as the twelfth way in mysteries.

(3) Raphael, "De Fundamento Medicinae Kabal. Mag. Chym."

If any others come to me they shall sleep in my chamber. If monitors come to keep watch they shall prove themselves; nor shall they be molested since they are equipped and content to dwell with the poor.

Meanwhile in whatever way thou canst help me to use these do assist me, particularly if they offer and show any mystical and occult secret wisdom of God, Nature and of Art. In the meantime I am cherishing inwardly, besides various other things, certain miscellaneous thoughts concerning the return of the spirit to God; re-

[1] British Museum, Sloane MS. 648, ff. 91, 92. Also Sloane MS. 649, ff. 104-112.

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but was unsuccessful because the treatise was in Latin.[1] Poleman, Hartlib's friend in Amsterdam, was apparently commissioned with the publication of the *Via veterum sa-*

embodying transmigration of souls, and metamorphosis or the separation, illumination and perfection of body, soul and spirit, in one word, deification or participation in and communion with the Divine Nature. Concerning this I have brought together and discerned between various authorities, both ancient and late, sacred and profane (lest I should seem, out of my own brain, to be arrogant and foolish), and I am toiling to lead back to behind the threshold.

What other things are in full play thou wilt see from the annexed Ichnograph. I received also lately from Upsala an Ich. of Thomas Agrivaillens, of Burius Aquilonaria, certain old Northern oracular runes, among which are:—

(1) Adulruna Therasica, concerning the mysteries of the Scripture.
(2) Adulruna Rediviva, concerning the mysteries of the Alphabet of three crowns. This thoroughly arranged, I sent, ex Burii Autographo, to Rome to Athanasius Kircher.
(3) Tabula Smaragdina [the Smaragdine Table attributed to Hermes] of the chronology of the Cherubim.
(4) Table of Hebrew Philosophy.
(5) Speciminis Linguae Scanfianae Tabula. [Table of a specimen of Scandinavian language.]
(6) Ariel Sueticus, or Mystical chronology.
(7) Runa Redux ad ol. Worm.
(8) Twelve songs of Suetica Puta:—
    Of the creation of the world.
    Of his own novitiate.
    Of the inner man.
    Of the complaint of the spirit.
    Of the sloth of the soul.
    Of the condition of the present time.
    Of the least in the kingdom of Heaven.
    Of remotest time.
    Of the fruits of the inner man.
    Of the way to the tree of life, etc.

And I await from the same:—

[1] *Worthington's Diary*, I, p. 64. Hartlib to Worthington, Dec. 12, 1655.

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pientum; in 1660 he wrote Hartlib that Betkius was so engaged with Boehme's works that he could not print Frankenberg's piece.[1] However, Betkius did print this work at a later date.

It has been suggested that Frankenberg was the author of the *Clavis Apocalyptica,* published by Hartlib and Dury. An extract of a letter to Hartlib states: "The Jesuits have learnt who is the author of Clavis Apocalyptica which you have translated and printed in English, and the Emperor hath set 4,000 Rix dollars upon his head." [Dated Lesna in Poland, 3 July, 1654].[2] It is true that Frankenberg was exiled on account of his teachings and that he took refuge in 1645 (in Danzig) with the astronomer Helvetius, whom he helped in mathematics. He died, however, in 1652,

(9) Famam e Scanfia Reducem.
(10) Ariel or the key of the Bible, etc.

Also Dn. Benedictus Figulus, who, with Dn. Comenius and Dn. D. Cyprianus Kinnerus this last 21 August was absent from Stockholm.

I desire Henry Reginald's Marg λεξιαν [? λεξιαν = speech]; Berellium's De Rebus Mysticis; M. J. Gaffarel's Codicum Caballisticum, Advis sur les Langues or De necessitate LL. Oriental, also his Abdita Divinae Kabala Mysteria; Hovardeus De arte Arcana [of secret art] and any others of this sort.

Farewell most learned philosopher Hartlib, and be kindly towards thy most affectionate

Gedani, 25 Aug. [i. e. Dantzic] Ao. 1646.

Abraham de Frankenburg (who desires thy answer by Dn. Comenius or kinsman George).

Dn. Hevelius's Silonographa* nundinis vernalibus will see light in France.

I send also a copy De Fontibus salutis prope Halberstadium [Concerning the fountains of health near Halberstadium], miracles by simple faith. (All magnetic).

*Hevelius's *Selenographie,* published in 1647.

[1] British Museum, Sloane MS. 648, f. 10.
[2] British Museum, Additional MS. 4156, f. 103.

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the year after the book was published. His connection with Helvetius suggests at once that he was well known in the group of Hartlib's progressive friends; certainly he was well known to Dury and Comenius. He was also a friend of Menasseh Ben Israel who came to England during Cromwell's Protectorate to promote the readmission of Jews into England. Menasseh's circle of Christian friends was large and distinguished. Of special interest to us perhaps are Frankenberg, to whom Menasseh sent a copy of his portrait in 1643,[1] Paul Felgenhauer, the ardent Boehme disciple, Milton, Dury, and Hartlib, whose "excellent Treatise The Revelation Revealed" [referring to the *Clavis Apocalyptica*] Menasseh commends in his *Hope of Israel,* published in London, 1652,[2] as "the most harmonious and clear of any discourse of that nature." We should remember at this point that Hartlib and Dury and the members of the "college invisible" in general were in favor of a religious toleration that included Jews—one of Boehme's great teachings.

A friend of Hartlib who figured largely in the Hartlib-Worthington correspondence and who was "most familiarly acquainted these many years with Mr. Dury,"[3] was the learned Adam Boreel of Amsterdam. Boreel was one of the leaders of the Dutch Collegiants,[4] a sect corresponding to the English Seekers. It is worthy of note that Hartlib, who seems to have made no friends among the sectarians of England, had friends among the well-known leaders of sects

[1] *Mennasseh Ben Israel's Mission to Oliver Cromwell.* Lucien Wolf, London, 1901. Notes, pp. 149, 169.

[2] Quoted in above, p. 53.

[3] *Worthington's Diary,* I, p. 290, Hartlib to Worthington, June 11, 1661. There are letters from Boreel to Hartlib in B. M. Sloane MS. 649.

[4] Hylkema: *Reformateurs,* Haarlem, 1902, pp. 150, 333.

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abroad. Boreel was also a follower of Jakob Boehme.[1] Blunt[2] even speaks of a Dutch sect of Boreelists started by Adam Boreel in the latter half of the seventeenth century, a sect of austere life and habits of worship, like the English Quakers rejecting all external ordinances of Divine worship.

The greatest possible contrast to Adam Boreel was presented by another follower of Boehme—Giffheyl,[3] a fanatical German who lived for some time in England and who seems to have been, to some extent at least, a protégé of Hartlib. He first became known in England in *Two Letters to the King.* By Giffheyl. Published March, 1643. To Worthington, Hartlib writes of Giffheyl as the author of an enclosed printed sheet—"one Gifthill who has travelled and written these thirty years after this manner."[4] To another correspondent[5] Hartlib writes the story of Giffheyl, who, in his opposition to the army and all authority and in his predictions of the approach of Christ's kingdom, seems an uneducated enthusiast carried to heights of fanaticism.

Much of our early information regarding the spread of Boehme's doctrines in England comes to us from his opponents. They note as a matter of course Boehme's attraction for the alchemists.[6] In 1655, Meric Casaubon in his

[1] J. W. Rumpaeus: *De Jacobo Bohmio,* Susati, 1714, p. 8, and Adolf von Harless: *J. B. und die Alchymisten.* Leipzig, 1882. Vorrede.

[2] J. H. Blunt: *Dictionary of sects, heresies, ecclesiastical parties and schools of religious thought,* London, 1874. Article, "Boreelists."

[3] Murdock's translation of *Mosheim's Church History,* Boston, 1892, IV, p. 391.

[4] *Worthington's Diary,* I, p. 163. Jan. 30, 1659.

[5] British Museum, Sloane MS. 648, f. 47.

[6] *The Practice of Christian Perfection.* By Thomas White, London, 1652. Dedicatory Epistle . . . "Except you have holinesse, you will be subject to run out to the wild and ungodly studies of Jacob Boehme, Astrology, etc."

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Treatise concerning Enthusiasm discussed the "Teutonic Chimericall extravagancies of Religion" and mentioned in a note, page 126, "Wigelius, Stifelius, Jac. Behmius; and divers others of that countrie, mere Fanaticks; as unto any sober man may appear by their writings: some of which have been translated into English." The year following, Dr. Henry More (1614-1687), the head of the Cambridge Platonists, whose interest in the whole mystical, Neoplatonic movement dates back to his reading of the *Theologia Germanica,* criticised Boehme rather unfavorably in his *Enthusiasmus Triumphatus.* In 1670 he published the *Philosophiae Teutonicae censura,* devoted entirely to a discussion of Boehme. He condemns the latter for his claim of inspiration, but speaks highly of him as a sincere man who intended no fraud. In fact, he said so much in favor of Boehme that the whole criticism, according to Carriere, had the opposite effect from the intended warning against Boehme; it acted, in fact, as a favorable judgment on the part of an unprejudiced theologian. The growth of the interest in Boehme's writings between 1655 when he is mentioned in a note and 1670 when a learned man devotes to him a whole treatise is remarkable, especially in view of More's statement that Boehme has very many admirers,[1] and just as many persons who consider him a diabolical heretic. More calls Boehme the apostle of the Quakers.[2]

[1] *Opera Omnia,* I, p. 531: "Sed hoc est quod dico me nempe manifesto mei ipsum obnoxium reperire censurae duarum et diametro oppositarum hominum partium, quippe alteri Autorem. Quem examinandum auscepi, tanti aestimant, ut nihil infra Canonizationem et Infallibilitatem, juxta hos enormes illius Admiratores, Meritorum ejus magnitutinem sequare possit. Alteri è contra eum adeò execrantur tanquam Hereticum Diabolicum."

[2] *Opera Omnia,* p. 532.

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It is said that More's interest in Boehme was due to the influence of Lady Anne Conway,[1] his "heroine pupil," at whose desire More wrote on Boehme. It may be that his real interest in the Teutonic philosopher, of whom he had known as early as 1646 through his friend Charles Hotham, dates back to the time of the *Conjectura Cabbalistica* (1653), of which Lady Conway was also the inspiration. A lover of the cabalistic doctrines could hardly fail to be attracted to Boehme. Certain it is that More's criticism in 1656 (in his *Enthusiasmus Triumphatus,* p. 294), is already of the very kindly tenor of the *Censura* appearing fourteen years later. Although More considers the poor shoemaker a holy and good man, he will not admit that his writings must proceed "from an infallible spirit." In the *Divine Dialogues* (2nd ed. 1667, pp. 460-70), More discourses again at some length on Boehme's doctrines and closes by affirming that there is but little danger in the Boehmist sect, since "at present, by a kind of oblique stroke, God does notable execution upon the dead formality and carnality of Christendom by these zealous Evangelists of an internal Saviour."

Lady Conway's interest in Neoplatonism was well-known —"her perusing of both Plato and Plotinus, her searching into and judiciously sifting the abstrusest writers of Theosophy."[2] Finally, in spite of the opposition of More, her learned tutor and friend, she became a professed Quaker. She had attended meetings of the Quakers with her physician, Mercurius van Helmont, who lived long in her family. Van Helmont was the son of Jean Baptiste van Helmont, the alchemist and follower of Paracelsus. If we judge from his

[1] Richard Ward: *The Life of the Learned and Pious Dr. Henry More,* London, 1710. Edited by M. F. Howard, London, 1911, p. 206.

[2] Ward, p. 205.

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character as sketched by More in the *Divine Dialogues* he seems to have been "skillful but eccentric and superstitious in his profession, and pious in a mystical way more akin to Behmenism than to the Quakers."[1] Lady Conway embodied her own beliefs on the principles of philosophy in a dissertation which was published some time after her death.[2] She makes no direct mention of Boehme, but many of her theories are thoroughly Boehmenistic in tone; the whole work is Neoplatonic with a special leaning to the Kabalah.

Beginning with the letter of January 8, 1668, the correspondence between Hartlib's friend Worthington and Henry More has frequent references to Boehme. "I believe you had your ears full of Behmenism at Ragly (Lady Conway's home)," writes Worthington; "for when I was at London, I met with one who was to buy all Jacob Behmen's works, to send thither. I wish (thought I) that nobody trouble their heads more than needs about finding what is not to be had there, but is in other books to better purpose, and without such trouble."[3] Later letters presuppose an excellent knowledge of Boehme's doctrines on the part of both writers and show their common opinion of the great good amid the "stubble, wood and hay" of his imperfect style. Worthington in fact cared enough about these writings to speak particularly of them in his will; to his aunt, Mrs. Elizabeth Foxcroft, he left "what pieces" he had of Boehme's.[4]

[1] Ward, p. 17.

[2] *Principia Philosophiae antiquissimae et recentissimae de Deo Christo,* Amsterdam, 1690. Translated into English: *The principles of the most ancient and modern philosophers.* Made English by J. C., London, 1692.

[3] *Worthington's Diary,* II, pt. ii, p. 287 ff.

[4] *Worthington's Diary,* II, pt. ii, p. 370.

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This influence which we have been tracing and which we have found molding the thoughts of the intellectual leaders of this period—learned men of various types—was at work more generally in the hearts of the common people. We have spoken of the rise of various English sects under the impulse of the nurseries of freedom in Holland which sent to England a persistent stream of mystical opinion and literature. This stream was the source of the animating ideas of Anabaptists, Familists, Seekers, Quakers, and many other sects insisting upon relinquishing lifeless ceremonies the inner meaning of which had long been forgotten. The earliest mention of a distinct sect that followed Boehme's teachings falls in 1655.

It is from Richard Baxter (1615-1691), the great Puritan opponent of all sects whatever, that we get the most information concerning the Boehmenists. "In these times (especially since the Rump reigned)," he tells us,[1] "sprang up five sects at least, whose Doctrines were almost the same, but they fell into several shapes and names: 1. The Vanists; 2. The Seekers; 3. The Ranters; 4. The Quakers; 5. The Behmenists." The fifth group forms the sect "whose Opinions go much toward the way of the former [Quakers], for the Sufficiency of the Light of Nature, the Salvation of Heathen as well as Christians, and a dependence on Revelation, etc. But they are fewer in number, and seem to have attained to greater Meekness and conquest of Passions than any of the rest. Their doctrine is to be seen in Jacob Behmen's Books, by him that hath nothing else to do, than to bestow a great deal of time to understand him that was not willing to be easily understood, and to

[1] *Reliquiae Baxterianae, or Mr. Richard Baxter's Narrative of the most Memorable Passages of his Life and Times*, I, p. 74, § 119; I, p. 77, § 124.

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know that his bombasted words do signifie nothing more than before was easily known by common terms. The chiefest of these in England are Dr. Pordage and his Family, who live together in community, and pretend to hold visible and sensible communion with angels." In a later discussion of the Nonconformists Baxter states: "The fourth sort are the Independents . . . who have opened the door to Anabaptists first, and then to all the other Sects. These Sects are numerous, some tolerable and some intolerable, and being never incorporated with the rest, are not to be reckoned with them. Many of them (the Behmenists, Fifth Monarchy-men, Quakers, and some Anabaptists) are proper Fanaticks, looking too much to Revelation within, instead of the Holy Scripture."[1] Baxter considers likewise that the "Popish Interest" is advanced "by their secret agency among the sectaries, Seekers, Quakers, Behmenists, etc."[2] The one friend whom Baxter prized from his early visit to London (about 1643) was Humphrey Blunden "who is since turned an extraordinary Chymist, and got Jacob Behmen his works translated and printed."[3]

The Dr. John Pordage (1607-1681) mentioned by Baxter was rector of Bradford from 1647 to 1654 under the patronage of Elias Ashmole, who had become interested in Pordage on account of his knowledge of astrology. In 1647, Pordage was tried for incompetency before the committee appointed during the interregnum to examine the cases of ministers, and the charge against him was dismissed.[4] In 1654 he was tried again, and on this occasion removed from his living. The accusation of being a mystical pantheist

[1] *Reliquiae Baxterianae*, II, p. 387, § 285.
[2] *Reliquiae Baxterianae*, I, p. 116, § 181.
[3] *Reliquiae Baxterianae*, I, p. 11.
[4] Wood: *Athenae Oxonienses*, II, p. 149.

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and his friendship for Abiezer Coppe, in 1649 a member of his household, worked against him. Coppe was an Anabaptist who later joined the Ranters; in 1651 he had been in correspondence with John Dury.[1]

Pordage's relation to Boehme explains the accusation of mystical pantheism brought in 1651-1654. Pordage did not, however, give up his study of the Teutonic philosopher. In 1683 was published his posthumous work, *Theologia Mystica,*[2] which Gottfried Arnold praised because it clearly and simply explained the hardest part of Boehme's writings.[3] Pordage, like many men of his time, was strongly influenced by astrology and alchemy, full of superstition regarding spirits and magic, yet susceptible at the same time to the highest mystical influences and inspiration. Ennemoser suggests a connection between Boehme and Pordage, also between Boehme and Henry More, because of the investigation, on the part of both Pordage and More, of the Kabalah, which Boehme had studied with his learned friend Balthasar Walter.[4]

Baxter, the authority on sectaries and "enthusiasts," repeats again and again his warnings against Quakers and Behmenists. "The new sects that rise up," he tells us, "are as confident that they are in the right and condemn all others, as if they had never been warned by the example of so many before them. . . . We cannot wonder therefore if among other sects, the Quakers (with their German

[1] Article, "Coppe": *Dictionary of National Biography.*

[2] *Theologia Mystica or the Mystic Divinitie of the Aeternal Invisible* . . . By a person of Qualitie J P M D [John Pordage, M.D.] London, 1683. Preface signed J. L. [Jane Lead]. Published by Edward Hooker.

[3] Gottfried Arnold: *Kirchen- und Ketzerhistorie,* II, p. 1107. (Arnold's commendation is hardly justified.)

[4] Joseph Ennemoser: *Geschichte der Magie,* Leipzig, 1844, p. 72.

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Brethren, the Paracelsians, Behmenists and Seekers) do step in and take their turns in the game, . . . the Quakers that give us their doctrine on a new Authority within them (and so Behmenists, Paracelsians and all Enthusiasts) . . . All along through most ages these Hereticks have sped, even down to the David-Georgians, Weigelians, Familists, and the like of late."[1] The Established Church with its trained and salaried clergy must be defended against the claims of a ministry depending only on the "inner light." "True ministers are like a 'Light that shineth to all the house,'" Baxter declares, "but let us try the particulars [of sectarian ministry]. 1. The Seekers have no church or ministry. 2. The Quakers have no ordination. 3. The Anabaptists, Socinians, Swenkfeldians, Familists, Paracelsians, Weigelians, and such like have no more to show for their ministry than we, but their errors; and are so few and lately sprung up that of them also I may say, that he that taketh them for the only church, or ministers, is either out of the faith, or much out of his wits."[2]

The German origin of this sectarian life, more than hinted at in Baxter's pamphlets, was often conceded in the polemics against the Quakers and other sects.[3] In fact, in his earliest mention of Boehme, Baxter sketches the indebtedness of the English mystical movement to Paracelsus and the German mystics: "John Arndt magnifieth him [Paracelsus];

[1] Baxter: *One Sheet against the Quakers,* London, 1657, pp. 1, 12, 13.

[2] Baxter: *A Second Sheet for the Ministry justifying our calling against Quakers, Seekers, and Papists, and all that deny us to be the Ministers of God,* London, 1657, p. 12.

[3] See *The Heart of New England rent at the Blasphemies of the present Generation . . . concerning the Doctrine of the Quakers.* John Norton, London, 1659. Also *Johannes Becoldus Redivivus; the English Quaker, the German Enthusiast Revived,* London? [Anony.]

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Weigelius calls him exceedingly illuminated and his Theologie he calls the pure and uncorrupt Scripture of the Prophets and Apostles. This Weigelius was the chief of his followers and successors. Then steps in John Arndt, Julius Sperber, Jesaias Stiefel and Ezekiel Meth, Paul Felgenhauer, and Jacob Behmen, whose books, much taken out of Paracelsus, and furthered by Kempis, Taulerus and others, are now translated into English by some admirers of him, possessed by the same conceits." [1] The general relation of the whole English movement to German mysticism is shown by the fact that all the accusations which the orthodox clergy in Germany brought up against Weigel and Boehme were likewise brought up against the English Independents and Quakers.[2] In Germany these religious-political Separatists would have been called "Weigelianer" and "Rosenkreuzer."

With very few exceptions the early information regarding the Boehmists and the spread of their doctrines in England comes to us from their opponents, who at least did not exaggerate in their favor. Baxter has another mention of them in 1655 [3] in which he groups them with the Quakers as persons under the influence of the Papists and their doctrines. Baxter may have noted that his century marked also a revival of quietistic and mystical devotion among English Catholics, as may be seen from their publications. John Anderdon writes *One Blow at Babel in those of the People called Behmenites* [4] in which, amid all his

[1] Baxter: *The Unreasonableness of Infidelity; manifested in four discourses,* London, 1655. See No. 3: *For Prevention of the Unpardonable Sin against the Holy-Ghost,* p. 147.

[2] Opel: *Valentin Weigel,* pp. 307-8.

[3] Baxter: *The Quakers' Catechism,* London, 1655.

[4] John Anderdon: *One Blow at Babel in those of the People called Behmenites, whose foundation is not upon that of the Prophets and*

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harsh criticism of "imaginary conceptions and carnal inventions," he seems obliged to admit that there "sometimes appeared an excellent spirit in Jacob Behmen in some things." Thomas Underhill, in his history of the Quakers,[1] speaks of a sect, "a more soberer sort, possest with the fancies of Jacob Bemon, the German Paracelsian prophet, and the Rosicrucians"; he quotes Baxter's *Sin against the Holy Ghost.* In *An Argument for Union,*[2] 1683, the Behmenists are mentioned in a list of sects that can hardly be permitted to associate with Presbyterians and other true Christians.

According to Baxter, as we have seen, the Quakers and the Behmenists held very similar beliefs. This was the general opinion of contemporary writers on Quakerism.[3] Lodowick Muggleton states it plainly in his *Looking-glass for George Fox the Quaker*[4]; the book called *Christianity no Enthusiasm, in answer to Thomas Ellwood's Defence*[5]

Apostles, which shall stand sure and firm forever; but upon their own Carnal Conceptions, begotten in their Imaginations upon Jacob Behmen's Writings, London, 1662.

[1] Thomas Underhill: *Hell broke loose: An history of the Quakers,* London, 1660.

[2] *An Argument for Union taken from the True Interest of those Dissenters in England who profess and call themselves Protestants,* London, 1683.

[3] See A. W. Boehme, p. 920, and Colberg, I, pp. 292-308.

[4] *Looking-glass for George Fox the Quaker and other Quakers,* London. Reprinted 1756. P. 10: "I suppose Jacob Behmont's Books were the chief Books that the Quakers bought, for there is the Principle or Foundation of their Religion . . . as for what books else you Quakers have bestowed money upon since you were Quakers, I think the Stationers will neither justify, neither can you shew none of any value."

[5] *Christianity no Enthusiasm: or the several kinds of Inspirations and Revelations pretended to by the Quakers, tried and found destructive to Holy Scripture and True Religion: In Answer to Thomas Elwood's Defence thereof in his Tracts, miscalled Truth Prevailing,* London, 1678, pp. 86-87.

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compares Boehme's teaching of the opening of the spirit within to the Quaker Seed or Birth. The final merging of the Boehmenists, as well as of the Familists and the Seekers, with the Quakers, was brought about, as the period of the religion of enthusiasm was nearing its close, by the dominating personality and constructive genius of George Fox, the great Quaker leader.[1]

The influence of Boehme on Quakerism was more, however, than the merging of two related sects. George Fox himself must have read Boehme during the formative period of his development. Barclay brings out the striking similarity of utterance on the part of the two men;[2] Sippell calls it "free quotation from Boehme's writings" on the part of Fox.[3] "The burden of the mystery of evil in its many concrete forms was always upon George Fox's spirit;"[4] the mystery of evil was the keynote of Boehme's thought.

Justice Hotham, who presided at one of the many hearings of George Fox, recognized the identity between Boehme and Fox in their teachings regarding the "inner light." Fox relates the event in his Journal for 1651. "Justice Hotham: a pretty tender man yt had had some experiences of Gods workeinge in his hearte: and after yt I had some discourse with him off ye thinges of God hee tooke me into his Closett and saide hee had knowne yt principle this 10 yeere: and hee was glad yt ye Lord did now publish it abroad to people."[5] Norman Penney in his notes to the

[1] Thomas Hancock: *The Peculium*, London, 1907, p. 122.

[2] Robert Barclay: *The Inner Life of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth*, London, 1876. P. 213 has passages from Fox's *Journal*, 1648, with parallel passages from Boehme.

[3] Theodor Sippell: Article on Quakers in *Christliche Welt* (pub. Marburg im Harz) for 1910, p. 436.

[4] Braithwaite: *Beginnings of Quakerism*, London, 1913, p. xliii.

[5] *The Journal of George Fox* edited by Norman Penney. Intro. by T. E. Harvey, Cambridge, 1911, I, p. 18.

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Journal suggests the identity of this justice with Sir John Hotham of Scarborough.[1] Sippell speaks of him as Justice Durand Hotham, whom we have already met[2] as a disciple of Boehme. Justice Hotham was the uncle of Sir John Hotham. If Durand Hotham had known of Boehme's "principle" for ten years, he must have read Boehme in MS. three years before the printing of the latter's works was begun in England.

The Seekers of Westmoreland, under the leadership of Thomas Taylor, Francis Howgil, John Camm, and John Audland, went over in a body to the Quakers. Certainly Thomas Taylor (1618-1682), originally a preacher of the Established Church, later a strong Puritan, with his particular followers and perhaps some of the other leaders of the Seekers, was a devout disciple of Boehme before he became a Quaker.[3] Other Quakers were students of Jakob Boehme before they became followers of George Fox, for instance, William Bayley[4] and F. Eccles, who published prophetical passages from Boehme's works.[5]

A change of attitude toward Boehme's teachings on the part of the Quakers and a rigorous attempt to rule out his influence shows how generally prevalent this interest in Boehme had become. The first indication of this change of attitude occurred "at a meeting at Rebecca Travers the 21st 7 mo. 1674. Upon reading of an Epistle of Ralph

[1] *Journal of George Fox*, I, p. 400.

[2] Sippell, p. 440.

[3] Hauck: Nachträge, 1913. Article on Seekers. Also Braithwaite: *Beginnings of Quakerism.*

[4] *A collection of the several Wrightings of that True Prophet, Faithful Servant of God and Sufferer for the Testimony of Jesus, William Bayley,* London, 1676. See introduction "to the Reader."

[5] *Christian Information concerning these Last times . . . also some prophetical Passages gathered out of Jacob Behme's Works:* F. E[ccles], London, 1664.

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Fretwells to the Behmenists it was agreed upon that a letter be writ to him and subscribed by Freinds of this meeting giving their reasons why it will not be of service to the Truth to print it."[1] In 1675 the first formal order was issued that in future no books be printed but what are read and approved, Ralph Fretwell's epistle to the Behmenites is minuted as "not to be published, not suitable, not safe," and two printers of the Society were especially cautioned against any infringement of these restrictions.[2] A letter of 1676 in the correspondence of Stephen Crisp shows that there

[1] MS. of Morning Meeting Book: I, 1673 to 1692, ff. 1, 2. At Friends Reference Library, Devonshire House, London. A copy of the letter is as follows: "Deare freind R. F. . . . Among other things that came before us thy Epistle to the Behmenists was presented and read and wee haveing well weighed it in the feare of God and in tender care of his Truth did think meet to signifie unto thee, that wee are not free it should be printed, hopeing thou wilt acquiesce with our Judgments therein, especially when thou knowes our reasons; which in short are these: First wee know the Spirit in which J. B. wrote many of his writings was not clear, but he lived in a great mixture of light and darkness as to his understanding, and sometimes the power of the one prevailed and sometimes the power of the other. Now the fruit of the one is judged in the day of God, and the other comes to its own center and flows forth again more purely: Then there being no distinction in thy Tytle, the Foxes among them would take advantage against us and the Truth, for denying Infants Baptisme, and the Bread, and Wine, and Pater Noster etc. for all which he wrote as may be seen, and then to tell them thou rec'd Light and power by them, is too much giving them encouragement to dwell there, where life is not, but dryness and barrenness have followed all who have stuck in his woods, and not come down to the seed that opens the misteries of God's Kingdome in themselves. Soo deare freind hoping this short hint of things may tend to thy satisfaction in this matter, wee rest leaving thee to the Lord's blessed power, by which thou and many in that Island wee understand are blessedly visited praying daily for your growth and establishment therein in which farewell. Thy Freinds in Truth.

Steven Crisp, William Gibson, William Bayley and five others."

[2] *The London Friends Meetings,* London, 1869, p. 342.

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was still a difference of opinion regarding Boehme among the members of the Society.[1] In 1681, Boehme's works were definitely proscribed by the Dublin Men's Meeting and a minister silenced for lending them.[2] It would appear that the reason for this decided change of attitude toward Boehme lay in the different beliefs regarding the sacraments. The Quakers wished to do away with the sacraments entirely. Upon the reading of Boehme's work *Of Christ's Testaments,* published 1652, they began to raise objections to Boehme; they avoided more and more the peculiar expressions that they had taken from Boehme's writings, until one of the early followers of Fox could later reproach his leader for now speaking a different language from formerly.[3]

Quakerism, the form under which English Independency reached the highest point in the development of ideas of freedom, independence, and democracy, the form under which after its brief period of political authority it returned to more strictly religious ideals, was also the form under which the purely religious side of humanism most nearly approached the humanism of the free societies and academies, that is, in the "Christian society of Friends," the name used by Fox in 1653. The first Quakers formed a great brotherhood. It was this close union within a firm and well-planned organization that made their progress so positive and their increase so significant, that made of the Quakers, from the first, almost a secret society, like the "Friends of God" of the fourteenth century. This organization, combined with the important ideas they devel-

[1] *Steven Crisp and his Correspondents,* 1657-1692. *Being a synopsis of the letters of the Colchester Collection.* Edited C. Fell Smith, 1892, p. 38.

[2] Barclay, p. 479, note.

[3] Sippell, p. 440. See also Troeltsch, p. 907.

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oped and disseminated, enabled the Quakers, of all the enthusiastic sects of the century, to win a permanent existence and to receive into their membership many adherents of slightly differing shades of belief. The courageous endurance, furthermore, of their despised sect—an endurance which no persecution could dismay—accomplished wonders toward the ultimate dissemination of the ideas animating the early teachers of true humanity. The cult-language of the Society of Friends, of the Bohemian Brotherhood, of the Waldenses, of the Anabaptists, and of the old evangelical communities shows many similarities; there are manifold echoes likewise from the inner circles of the academies and the free societies. The Society of Friends stood in much closer personal relation to the contemporary secular societies of friends, as members of the academies often called themselves, than we usually suppose. This characteristic emphasis on friendship is shown in the name of the German student academy "Orden der Freundschaft" or "Amizisten," which received, curiously enough, among other abusive epithets, the name "Verfluchte Quäker." It is interesting to note that the German "Sprachgesellschaften," like the Anabaptists and the Quakers, refused to take oath.[1]

Up to this point we have attempted to throw light upon the spread of Boehme's writings approximately during the lifetime of Milton. Perhaps the greatest proof of the impetus that the movement had gained in England, even in its earlier years, is shown by its continued growth and vitality. That which found expression in the middle of the seventeenth century in sectarian life, "in the regular societies of Behmenists in Holland and England, embracing not only the cultivated but the vulgar," continued not as a

[1] *M. C. G.*, XVI, p. 155, XVII, p. 264.

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sect but as the leavening teaching, philosophical as well as devotional, within the recognized churches. There were many churchmen who were quite as much followers of Boehme as those persons who had left the church to join a Behmenite separatist group. A man of this type was Edward Taylor (died 1684 in Dublin), whose clear and lucid style recommends his explanation of Boehme's principles, collected and published in 1691.[1] An undated MS. copy of the *Way to Christ* has at the end in another hand (unquestionably of the seventeenth century) a series of "Pious Meditations" and a "Prayer in time of Affliction" that show the owner of the volume to have been an orthodox churchman.[2]

A seventeenth-century English society, founded for the purpose of studying and explaining the teachings of Boehme, a society much smaller and of much less importance than the Society of Friends and with none of its missionary zeal, was the Philadelphian Society. This first appeared publicly in London in 1697 and had an organized exsitence only until 1704, but it was really part of a group of "spiritual people who for above fifty years had met together after the primitive way of attendance or waiting for the Holy Spirit, to assist them in Praying or Speaking to Edification of each other. And these are supposed to have had their rise, at least in part, from some English

[1] Edward Taylor: *Jacob Behmen's Theosophic Philosophy Unfolded.* (With a short account of Boehme's life.) London, 1691.

[2] Bodleian Library, MS. Rawl. C. 763. From "A Prayer in time of Affliction," f. 106b, ". . . adding likewise to ye guilt of my transgressions, for was it through ignorance that I suffered innocent blood to be shed by a false pretended way of Justice; or that permitted a wrong way of thy worship to be sett up in Scotland? and injured the Bi[sho]ps in England? O no; but with shame and griefe I confess that I therein followed the persuasions of worldly wisdome, forsaking the dictates of a right enformed conscience."

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mysticks, with whose writings they were conversant and afterward from a fresh gale and excitement of the Holy Spirit for Revival of that work of God and Preparation of His kingdom. This was first experienced by Mrs. Pordage, wife of Dr. John Pordage, author of the Theologia Mystica: who married her for excellent gift and became himself partaker of it. Mr. Thomas Bromeley and Mr. Edmund Brice who having heard a sermon preached by Dr. Pordage at St. Marie's the University Church [Oxford] went together to discourse with him and received such a satisfaction from him that they immediately joyned themselves to this little society. Also the Earl of Pembroke at this time being convinced of the extraordinary Power and Operation of the Spirit among them, joyned himself and waited with them."[1]

The outcome of this movement was a league of Christians who insisted on depth and inwardness of the spirit.[2] They likewise made plans to emigrate to America, the land of Utopian freedom. Jane Lead (1623-1704), who became their leader, had been greatly influenced by the Independent conventicles of London which she visited in 1643. In 1652 she came into close relationship with Pordage and Bromley, for a time a member of the Pordage household, ardent mystics and, as we know, students of Boehme. About 1670

[1] Bodleian Library, MS. Rawl. D. 833, ff. 64-82. Miscellaneous Papers of Richard Roach (1662-1730). He published *The Great Crisis*, 1726 (An account of contemporary mystics, etc.); *The Imperial Standard of Messiah Triumphant*, 1727. Roach was a Philadelphist.

[2] The following little volume may be the work of one of the members of this group; it is a curious dissertation of creation, good and evil, on Boehme's principles: *Heaven the End of Man or the Final Cause of the Soul's Spirit.* By William Williams, Teutonico-Philosopho-Theologus, London, 1696.

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she began writing her many devotional books and pamphlets, founded on Boehme's theology.

These works of Jane Lead were by a later writer recommended to the Rosicrucians,[1] probably the last illustration of the connection between Boehme and the alchemists. A similar connection is seen in a group of German Pietists[2] (they were also called "true Rosicrucians" or "the theosophical brotherhood") under Johann Jacob Zimmermann (1644-1694), who left Germany for the new world in 1693. Zimmermann was one of the best astronomers and mathematicians of his day and as such received acknowledgment from the Royal Society of England. He became interested in Boehme through his physician, Ludwig Brunnquell, wrote on Boehme, and was finally discharged from his pastorate on that account. According to Croese,[3] Zimmermann became the leader of a group of Behmenist Pietists who bore a very close resemblance to the Quakers. The emigrants were assisted on their way by the Quakers of Holland and the Philadelphists of London; with the latter they had considerable intercourse. In Pennsylvania, from their settlement on the banks of the Wissahickon, they began a movement for systematic education and made the first attempt within the bounds of Pennsylvania toward the erection and maintenance of a charitable institution for religious and moral education. To bring about a union of all the various sects into one universal Christian church was one of the chief aims of Johann Kelpius, their leader since the death of Zimmermann just before the brotherhood sailed from Holland. Among the books carried to America by

[1] Hermann Fictuld: *Probierstein Chymischer Schriften,* quoted in *Zeitschrift für Historische Theologie,* XXXV, p. 201.
[2] Sachse: *German Pietists of Provincial Pennsylvania.*
[3] Croese: *Quäker-historie,* pp. 742 ff.

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these men were several complete sets of Boehme's works in the Amsterdam edition of Gichtel, 1682, ten volumes.[1] It is instructive to compare the spirit of freedom and toleration in Pennsylvania with the spirit of religious compulsion which developed so early in the various colonies of Massachusetts. In the latter, the memory of escape from oppression quickly produced men who would be masters in their turn and who evolved from evangelical freedom a religious régime with the severity of Old Testament law. The Quaker colonies show how greatly the Calvinistic spirit of early Puritanism had been modified under the later domination of the religion of enthusiasm.

The writings of Jane Lead (to return for a moment to the Philadelphists) were elaborated and published by Francis Lee (1661-1719), fellow of St. John's College, Oxford, who also published works of his own on Boehme.[2] This takes us well into the eighteenth century.

The end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century saw, in fact, a number of gifted men devoted to Boehme's principles, men such as Lee, George Cheyne, Thomas Tryon, Dionysius Andreas Freher, William Law.[3]

[1] Sachse: p. 53.

[2] For list of Jane Lead's Works published between 1681 and 1704 see *Dictionary of National Biography*. See also articles in *Zeitschrift für Historische Theologie*, XXXV, and *British Quarterly Review*, LVIII, pp. 181-87.

Works of Francis Lee: *Dissertations*. 2 vols. 1752.

Paraphrase of Boehme's Supersensual Life, printed in Law's edition of B., and said by the editors to be by Law, IV, 1781.

Mystical Poems (in Jane Lead's Works), almost certainly by Lee. See *Notes and Queries*, 4th series, XII, p. 38. See also list of works published anonymously, in *Dictionary of National Biography*, and J. H. Overton: *William Law*, pp. 408-10.

[3] Works of these followers of Boehme not mentioned in Bibliography:

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Freher (1649-1728) was a German philosopher of great learning and piety. During the latter years of his life, spent in London, he appears to have been entirely taken up with the elucidation and illustration of Boehme's writings; he also continually had with him a friend, Leuchter by name, a draftsman, to execute the beautiful drawings and symbols with which his demonstrations are so abundantly illustrated, and to make copies of the same for others. These commentaries have become known, although they have never been published.[1]

William Law (1687-1762), the greatest of all the exponents of Boehme, was an eminent scholar of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, who left holy orders because of his refusal to take the oath of allegiance to King George I. He learned German in order to make a complete English edition of Boehme's works, based on the careful German edition of

George Cheyne (1671-1743):
Philosophical Principles of Natural Religion . . . 1705. 2nd ed., corrected and enlarged, 1715.
Dr. Cheyne's own Account of Himself and of his Writings . . . 1743.
Philadelphia Society.
Propositions . . . extracted from the Reasons for the Foundation of a Philadelphian Society. 1697.
Theosophical Transactions of the Philadelphia Society. Nos. 1-5, 1697. See also article in *The Dawn,* London, Dec., 1862, pp. 236-42.
Thomas Tryon (1634-1703):
The Way to Health, 1691.
Tryon's Letters, 1700.
The Knowledge of a Man's Self, 1703.
Some Memoirs of the Life of Mr. Thomas Tryon (mostly by himself). 1705.

[1] For a list, see Freher's MSS. in Appendix B, Barker's edition of the *Threefold Life of Man,* taken from *Memorial of Law,* pp. 679-84. These MSS. are in Dr. Williams's Library, Gordon Square, London.

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Gichtel, 1730. The accomplishment of this plan was prevented by Law's death.[1] Perhaps Law's broadest influence was felt by that great religious society, "the English Pietists of the eighteenth century," the Methodists. Although their founder John Wesley quarreled with Law and wrote disdainfully of Boehme on account of Law's interest in his writings, the followers of Wesley read considerably more of Law than his famous *Christian Perfection* and *Serious Call,* written before Law knew Boehme. In fact, Boehme's devotional treatises as well as Law's later works were to be found among the books of the early Methodists.

In any discussion of the formative influences of the seventeenth century, the importance of Cromwell's army in molding opinion as well as in building up a new state-form must be borne in mind. "The Sectarian Soldiers much infected the Countrys, by their Pamphlets and Converse, and the people admiring the conquering Army, were ready to receive whatsoever they commended to them; and it was the way of the Faction to speak what they spake as the Sense of the Army, and to make the People believe that whatsoever Opinion they vented, it was the Army's Opinion."[2] In this army, "tied together by the point of liberty of conscience," Jakob Boehme's *Morgenröthe im Aufgange* (the early title for the *Aurora*) was zealously read.[3] For a long time Dell, Saltmarsh, William Sedgwick, and Hugh Peters—mystics every one and devout preachers of the "inner light"—were the chief ministers of the army, and indefat-

[1] For discussion of Law's relation to Boehme, see chapter on "William Law and the Mystics" in *Cambridge History of English Literature,* IX.

[2] *Reliquiae Baxterianae,* I, pp. 56-80.

[3] Weingarten, p. 100.

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igable workers. Morgan Lloyd (died 1659), a Welshman, son of a Puritan mother, was chaplain of the Parliamentary troops during the civil war. In 1646 he was put in charge of the parish of Wrexham, where he began writing the numerous Welsh tracts which proclaim him a follower of Boehme. In 1653 was published his *Book of Three Birds,* a work thoroughly Boehmenistic in tone; he discourses on the Heaven and Hell within man, the regeneration and new birth of the soul, the God in man as Will, Word or Love, and Power. The book is a controversy of two birds, the Dove (real Christians) and the Raven (pretended Christians) before the Eagle (Oliver Cromwell). Lloyd had been much attracted to the Quakers, but, although an outspoken Independent, he never joined them and was consequently roundly scored by George Fox.[1]

Closely connected with the influence of the army, that "hot-bed of Independency," was the political influence of Boehme's followers, and this in turn was hardly to be distinguished from the religious interest. Detached and separate from the prevailing parties of the time the keen political genius of Sir Henry Vane the younger stands out prominently. Baxter calls the political following of Vane a religious sect. Vane's practical principles are now of recognized value, though before him no statesman had dreamed of a doctrine so thoroughly democratic. "With him appears the doctrine of natural right and government by consent, which, however open to criticism in the crude form of popular statement, has yet been the moving principle of the modern reconstruction of Europe." This doctrine was the

[1] See A. N. Palmer: *A History of the Older Nonconformity of Wrexham and its Neighborhood,* Wrexham, 1888. Also, *A Winding Sheet for Mr. Baxter's Dead . . . being an Apology for several Ministers,* London, 1685.

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result of his recognition of the "rule of Christ in the natural conscience," in the elemental reason, by virtue of which man is properly a law to himself. From the same idea followed the principle of religious toleration, and the principle of excluding the magistrates' power from maintaining and restraining any kind of opinion. To Vane, "the eldest son of religion," Milton was content to leave the direction of "both spiritual power and civil."[1] Did Milton know the source of Vane's inspiration, political as well as religious? If we read the latter's *Retired Man's Meditations*[2] we cannot fail to find the source; the whole work breathes Boehme's teachings.

A factor in the political situation of the early years of the Commonwealth—a factor for a very brief space only—was Gerrard Winstanley (1609-*c.* 1660). His story is soon told —a dutiful son of the Established Church who saw, in the logical consequences of the doctrine of the "inner light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world," the marvelous vision of political independence for all men; a humble working-man who lived a few years of tremendous activity and influence in the rarefied atmosphere of enthusiastic religion and whose work then seemingly came to naught when Cromwell assumed the protectorate. Winstanley was a Seeker, one of the "Children of Light," by some considered the spiritual father of Quakerism.[3] In matters of religion he was closely related to Fox, but there is no proof that Winstanley and Fox were personally acquainted. Fox may have read Winstanley's many theological pam-

[1] Milton's sonnet to Sir Henry Vane the Younger, 1652.

[2] Henry Vane, Knight: *A Retired Man's Meditations or the Mysteries and Power of Godliness,* London, 1655. See especially chap. v, "Creation of Man." See also Hauck, 3rd ed., Nachträge, article on Seekers, and T. H. Green, *Works,* London, 1888, III, pp. 294 ff.

[3] Hauck, 3rd ed., Nachträge: "Seekers."

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phlets that came out in 1648-1649, the year to which the origin of Quaker doctrines is usually ascribed. Winstanley's main interest, however, was not religious, but social and communistic. The Diggers, under his leadership, tried to force social reform, beginning with an attempt to reclaim unused land for the community. Winstanley's writings show clearly the strong influence of Boehme. Berens [1] speaks of the influence of the Familists, but that is not all. Winstanley treats of creation, of the problem of evil, of the rightful independence of man on account of his birthright of reason or inner light from God, of all life as a struggle between self-love and reason. His political writings culminate in a marvelous document, practically as unknown as the wonderful *Nova Solyma* by Samuel Gott,[2] that closes the list of seventeenth-century Utopian literature, *The Law of Freedom in a Platform or true Magistracie Restored,* London, 1652. "More's *Utopia* secured for its author world-wide renown. Winstanley's is unknown even to his own countrymen. Yet let any impartial student compare the ideal society conceived by Sir Thomas More—a society based upon slavery, and extended by wars carried on by hireling, mercenary soldiers—with the simple, peaceful, rational, and practical ideal pictured by Gerrard Winstanley and it is to the latter that he will be forced to assign the laurel crown." [3] The main work of reformation—and we are surely reading a follower of Boehme here—is

[1] L. H. Berens: *The Digger Movement,* London, 1906.

[2] *Nova Solyma, the ideal city; or, Jerusalem regained; an anonymous romance written in the time of Charles I, now first drawn from obscurity and attributed to the illustrious John Milton . . .* by the Rev. Walter Begley, London, 1902. Written by Samuel Gott; see *The Library* (London), July, 1910.

[3] Berens, p. 163.

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to reform the clergy, the lawyers, and the law; for all the complaints of the land are wrapped up within these three, not in the person of a king.

In presenting this evidence of the widespread knowledge and deep influence of Boehme's writings, we have been obliged to emphasize the facts of such a knowledge rather than the ideas themselves; these ideas, thus brought from their German home, where they had found little possibility of becoming an incentive to a broader spiritual life, found welcoming hearts in their new English home. Boehme's importance is due not only to the tremendously valuable ideas added by him to the abounding stream of Neoplatonic mysticism in England, but also to the depth that he gave to this stream, to his ability to "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a *reason* of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." Others had taught the "inner light that lighteth every man," but of the nature of man and of that inner light they did not teach, nor could they tell of creation, of the origin and reason of the evil under which their hearts suffered and bled, of the place of evil in the world-system, of why "God is all in all, and Heaven and Hell are within."[1] The manner in which some of these thoughts have become a great poet's gift to the world will be shown in Boehme's relation to Milton.

[1] *The Light and Dark Sides of God, or a plain and brief Discourse of The light side, God, Heaven, and Earth, The dark side, Devil, Sin, and Hell . . .* By Jacob Bauthumley, London, 1650. See "Epistle to the Reader." The author is evidently a follower of Boehme, although he makes no mention of his master's name.

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IV

MILTON AND BOEHME

As a young man Milton's father became a Protestant and was consequently disowned by his zealous Catholic parents. The poet Milton grew up in a Puritan home where religion was not a matter of inheritance but of conviction, and where a feeling for the true inwardness of religious life became a part of his very nature. A consciousness of the essential characteristics of the reformation as a continual progress toward the knowledge of things divine was Milton's birthright and equipment for life and service. Toland says that the poet belonged in youth to the Presbyterians, in later life to the Independents and Baptists, and that finally he freed himself from all church affiliations. Certain it is that while on many questions he came early to a definite stand, in others he advanced far beyond the viewpoint of his youth and early manhood. For this reason his personality and writings alike hold up a mirror to the spiritual and intellectual progress of his time.

Milton's education, his early ideals, and the general course of his life were dominated by Puritanism;[1] not, however, the stern, exaggerated Puritanism of a later polemic epoch, but an earnest, yet warm devotion to religion that included the beautiful with the good, that found no irreconcilable contrast between love of music and poetry and love of God. Early in his university career he realized that he was to find there no real education for the ministry,

[1] Pauli: *Aufsätze zur Englischen Geschichte*, p. 349.

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to which he had at first hoped to give himself, but rather a "school of divinity that obscured all true religion." When in 1642 an opponent reproached him for having wasted his time worse than frivolously at the university, he denounced in no doubtful terms the whole educational system.[1] Nevertheless, thanks to the care of his father for his earlier training, he laid at the university the foundation for his scholastic greatness. Moreover, "coming to some maturity of years, and perceiving what tyranny had invaded the church, that he who would take orders must subscribe slave and take an oath withal, which . . . he must either straight perjure, or split his faith," he "thought it better to prefer a blameless silence before the sacred office of speaking, bought and begun with servitude and forswearing."[2]

A silence of the pen, however, even under adverse conditions, was never a part of Milton's plan. His poetical aspirations were determining his actions even before the Italian journey upon which he received so much encouragement from new friends, so that, as he tells us, "I began thus far to assent both to them and divers of my friends here at home, and not less to an inward prompting which now grew daily upon me, that by labour and intense study (which I take to be my portion in this life), joined with the strong propensity of nature, I might perhaps leave something so written to aftertimes, as they should not willingly let it die."[3] At Horton he had been consciously preparing in his study of the Greek and Latin authors for greater poetic flights. As late as 1642 he had not yet completed

[1] Prose Works, III, p. 112: *Apology.*
[2] Same, II, p. 482: *Church Government.*
[3] Same, III, p. 509: Letter no. XVII.

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"the full circle of his private studies."[1] His early poetry hints at the lofty ideal of a union of classical and Christian elements—an ideal which was to characterize the works of his later great creative period—but the classical element then held by far the larger place in Milton's mind;[2] he longed to know the land in which memory of the greatness and beauty of the ancients was still a living power.

In the spring of 1638 Milton started on his journey to Italy. It is interesting to note how quickly he came into contact with the academy spirit, not only in the societies, the Academia della Crusca and others of Florence and Rome,[3] but also in academy members. He met Hugo Grotius[4] in Paris. In Rome he met Lucas Holstein, who showed him particular courtesy and friendliness, to whom one of Milton's "familiar letters" is addressed.[5] Milton also visited Galileo,[6] the blind "prisoner of the inquisition," and, finally, he visited the father of Ezekiel Spanheim of Geneva, with whom he later corresponded.[7]

From all accounts that we have the journey was entirely one of artistic and literary stimulation. Milton was still full of the thought of his mission as a poet, who, writing in his mother-tongue, should sometime bring honor to his native land. Nevertheless his first public acts upon his return to London were contrary to this ideal; he began a long period of polemic writing. Doubtless his Puritan conscience was roused to combat the perverters of true religion, the "hireling shepherds." But is that a sufficient explana-

[1] Prose Works, II, p. 476.
[2] Stern, I, p. 259.
[3] Masson, I, p. 610.
[4] *M. C. G.*, XVI, pp. 122, 234.
[5] Prose Works, III, p. 498: Letter no. IX.
[6] Masson, I, p. 629.
[7] Prose Works, III, p. 509: Letter no. XVII.

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tion of the striking change that is now evident? That the change is not superficial we must infer from the long years —the best part of Milton's lifetime—of public-spirited devotion to the cause of liberty. Milton employed a most effective medium of controversial prose—a medium, however, far from congenial to the thoroughly classical interests and inclinations of a poet whose instincts and training led him rather to the retired leisure of a life devoted to "divinest Melancholy." In the academies he came into contact with men of highest culture and education, whose interests were not, as we have seen, wholly confined to literature and art; the patriotic spirit of Dante whose Divine Comedy had rescued his mother-tongue from oblivion was still alive. The Academia della Crusca had already become the model for those centers of interest in national reform and progress, the German "fruchtbringende Gesellschaften." Some of Milton's deepest impressions must likewise have come from the publicist-poet Hugo Grotius, the first man to teach that the state is a civil contract between people and ruler, as opposed to the generally prevalent idea of divine rights of king.[1] He must have been impressed also by the depths of national spirit in the Calvinistic republic at Geneva. In Rome a conscious spirit of opposition seems to have been aroused in him; he spoke openly and decidedly about his religion. Upon his return from Italy (1639) Milton entered public life.

His writings during the period from his return until 1644 are strictly Presbyterian in spirit.[2] He is opposed to

[1] *De jure belli ac pacis,* Paris, 1625. See Weingarten, p. 289.

[2] "Of Reformation in England and the causes that hitherto have hindered it; and Of prelatical episcopacy," 1641. "The Reason of Church Government urged against Prelaty," 1642. "Animadversions upon the Remonstrants Defense against Smectymnuus, and Apology for Smectymnuus," 1642. "Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce,"

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prelaty, to church forms lingering on from the days of the Roman church, to the prevailing influences in the universities, to the deadening scholasticism of his age. At the same time he expresses clearly the belief in a state church without bishops, and in predestination. Man is born impure, subject to the prince of this world, the devil; punishment and hell await the unelect; the elect are to be saved through the merits of Christ and his reconciliation.

The idea of freedom, however, has been steadily developing through this period, in the great advance made from a hierarchical, bishops' church to the somewhat more democratic Presbyterian form. In the tracts on divorce, Milton works out his ideas of freedom along domestic lines. The personal equation enters deeply here, to be sure, in his bitter reiteration of the strictly orthodox "chief end of woman" and her rights—to absolute subserviency. But the sacrament of marriage becomes under his exposition the civil contract that it had been among the old German races before the Roman church, during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, absorbed it as an additional hold upon the mind of freeborn man.[1]

The writings of the year 1644, before the completion of the series on divorce, mark further progress in Milton's views, a greater advance toward liberty. These are the *Areopagitica* and the *Tractate on Education,* dealing respectively with freedom of speech and education to freedom.

The *Tractate on Education* was dedicated to Samuel Hartlib, at whose "earnest entreaties and serious conjurements" it was written, at a time when Milton's mind was

1643. "Judgment of Martin Bucer concerning Divorce," 1644. "Tetrachordon," and "Colasterion," 1645.

[1] Weinhold: *Die Deutschen Frauen,* I, pp. 357-58.

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"half diverted in the pursuance of some other assertions, the knowledge and the use of which cannot but be a great truth, and honest living with much more peace"[1]—the works on divorce. This is the first mention of the friendship between these men which may well have begun, however—as Milton's reference to "incidental discourses into which we have wandered" seems to suggest—some time before this writing appeared. Hartlib came to England in 1629. From a letter of his, June, 1638, to Joseph Meade of Christ's College, Cambridge, Milton's former tutor, we see that he was living in a house in Duke's Place in London, not far from the house Milton took on his return from the continent. There Hartlib remained, it appears, until 1650, when he removed to Charing Cross in the neighborhood of Whitehall.[2] Milton had moved in 1647 to High Holborn; in 1650, as secretary of the Commonwealth, he removed to Charing Cross for a time, then to Whitehall, and then to Petty-France. Although there is but scanty record of the friendship between Milton and Hartlib, there is no reason to suppose that it terminated before Hartlib's death. In 1654 a Leyden correspondent, probably Dury, writes to Hartlib suggesting that Milton will find material for his controversy with More if he will write to Geneva.[3] Hartlib often mentions Milton in his letters to Boyle.[4] In 1660 an Amsterdam correspondent, possibly Adam Boreel, asks Hartlib what the Restoration is doing to Milton.[5] It

[1] Prose Works, III, p. 462: *On Education.*

[2] Althaus, p. 205.

[3] British Museum, Sloane MS. 649, f. 30: "Mori contra Miltonum Apologiam vidisse vos credo. Si Miltonus de Mori testimoniis certiora nosse cupit, scribat Genevam, et ad viduam Salmasianam, qua ipsi abunde suppeditabit materiam."

[4] Boyle's Works, V.

[5] British Museum, Sloane MS. 649, f. 41: "De Miltono, et captivis, quid actom fuerit, aut egetur, proximis tuis mihi rescribes."

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would have been remarkable indeed if a zealous man like Hartlib, "the stimulus to all good in England," as one of his correspondents called him,[1] had been unable to attract Milton and interest him for his plans. In addition to that, Hartlib's religious and political ideas could not fail to be congenial to those of the poet.

The group of friends most closely associated with Hartlib during the years 1640-1660 included Haak, Pell, Dury, Boyle, Oldenburg, and Comenius, during the latter's visit to London—all men filled, as we have seen, with the reform ideas of the free societies and of Valentin Andreae. Milton's ambition to glorify his mother-tongue, his tendency to unite in his poetry the beauty of antiquity with the moral greatness of Christianity, his broad interest in nations other than his own, his opposition to scholasticism, his activity in the interest of reform in church and school—all these interests made him a congenial member of this circle of friends to which Hartlib introduced him. Milton mentions "our friend Dury" in one of his letters;[2] Haak and Pell were his friends;[3] four letters of his correspondence with Oldenburg are preserved; Boyle was a brother of Milton's friend, Lady Ranelagh, whose son was a pupil first of Milton, then of Oldenburg. We might readily expect also that a man like Milton would become acquainted with the celebrated foreigner Comenius; that seems, however, not to have been the case, if we may judge from Milton's hardly friendly allusion to two of Comenius's best-known works: "to search what many modern Januas and Didactics,[4] more than ever I shall read, have pro-

[1] Stern, II, p. 282.
[2] Prose Works, III, p. 518, to John Badians.
[3] Stern, II, p. 280.
[4] Among Comenius's works are *Janua linguarum reservata, Janua rerum, Didaktika magna.*

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jected."[1] Nevertheless he thoroughly agreed with Comenius that language is merely the instrument of knowledge. Haak, whom Milton may likewise have known earlier (Haak studied theology in Cambridge and Oxford about 1625), returned permanently to England in 1629 after a brief stay on the continent. For a short time Haak was deacon under Joseph Hall, Bishop of Exeter. He seems, then, to have lived without office in London, in close association with Pell, Selden, Hartlib, and the Swabian poet Weckherlin; he was an attentive friend of German visitors to England, Comenius and Hermann Mylius among others. Haak translated many theological works from Dutch into English, also from English into German, and was the first to translate *Paradise Lost* into German. To Johann Seobald Fabricius, brother of the influential Heidelberg court preacher, he sent a copy of his translation of the first three books and part of the fourth. The work was never printed but was used by Ernst Gottlieb von Berge in his translation of *Paradise Lost,* Zerbst, 1682.[2]

In 1645 Haak suggested the organization of the "philosophical" or "invisible college," the membership of which is represented by such men as Pell, Dury, Boyle, and Oldenburg. These men are generally known as the investigators in mathematics and science who later became members of the Royal Society. Not all members of the "invisible college," however, took an active part in investigation, nor was that the only interest of the society. Plans of reform seem to have been represented by various individuals, perhaps merely closely associated with the "college" and not really members of it, such as Dury's great work to bring about

[1] Prose Works, III, p. 464: *On Education.*

[2] *Zeitschrift für Vergleichende Litteraturgeschichte und Renaissance-Litteratur,* Neue Folge, I, pp. 428, 431-32.

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the union of all Protestant churches into one great united world church, Hartlib's efforts toward the increase of wealth and general prosperity through the use of improved agricultural methods, and Milton's far-reaching activity in the struggle for separation of church and state.

The *Areopagitica,* a plea for the privilege of printing without a license, which appeared late in 1644, is the formal expression of Milton's changed attitude; thus he attached himself to the rapidly growing Independent party. New oppressors had arisen in the persons of the former apostles of freedom. The Presbyterians, since the autumn of 1643 the ruling power in the state church, had only too quickly learned to feel at home in the rôle of prelates. Formerly they had insisted upon freedom of the press—a view opposed by the Episcopal censors; later they used this freed press against the bishops. Now, however, when this same freedom might be used in opposition to their plans of church reform (a mere change in form and title), the Presbyterians had to disregard their early views about the freedom of the press. For the growth of religious truth, Milton demanded free discussion within the church, an unhindered development of differences among the believers themselves, in a word, religious toleration. For him Protestantism must cease when implicit faith is demanded.[1] The apostle of freedom explains the origin of censorship—invented by the popes as a weapon against the Reformation, then adopted by the English prelates, and finally inherited by the Presbyterians. An invention might be good, whoever the inventor, but censorship turned out to be as subversive of liberty as the worst enemy of liberty could desire, since it protected neither author nor reading public, to both of whom its mere existence was a degrading insult. The problems

[1] Liebert: *Milton,* p. 164.

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of evil and of free-will come up in the *Areopagitica*. In discussing them Milton appears to be not entirely decided perhaps, but certainly already at variance with the orthodox Presbyterian dogma on these questions which were later to constitute the basis of his great poetical works. "It was from out of the rind of an apple tasted, that the knowledge of good and evil, as two twins cleaving together, leaped forth into the world. And perhaps this is the doom which Adam fell into of knowing good and evil; that is to say, of knowing good by evil." [1] "Many there be that complain of divine Providence for suffering Adam to transgress. Foolish tongues! When God gave him reason, he gave him freedom to choose, for reason is but choosing; he had been else a mere artificial Adam, such an Adam as he is in the motions. We ourselves esteem not of that obedience or love, or gift, which is of force." [2]

This liberty of printing was to apply not only to Latin, the tongue of the learned, but to the language of the people as well, so that if "any one would write and bring his helpful hand to the slow-moving reformation which we labor under, if truth have spoken to him before others, or but seemed at least to speak," [3] his message might be heard. Hartlib, in his *Macaria,* three years before, had named in the "natural causes of reformation a spread of knowledge through the press, that the common people, knowing their own rights and liberties, will not be governed by way of oppression." [4] Thus we see a striking similarity of thought on the part of Milton, Hartlib's personal friend.

The four years 1645 to 1649 represent in Milton's public

[1] Prose Works, II, p. 67: *Areopagitica.*
[2] Same, p. 74.
[3] Same, p. 98.
[4] Harleian Miscellany, IV, p. 386: *Macaria.*

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life a pause during which, aside from the sonnets against the Presbyterians and to Fairfax, he published nothing. In this period, the struggle between king and people reached its climax. The four years form for Milton not a pause for rest, but a pause for work, for preparation for new and extraordinary activity. Before this he had said farewell to poetry to devote himself to theology; now he turned from theology to politics. From his later writings we learn that he spent this time largely in the study of the history, constitution, and laws of his native land. In the *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates,* February, 1649, written at his own initiative to allay the wild strife of feelings and opinions called forth by the imprisonment of King Charles,[1] he strikes at once the keynote of his independency. The attitude of toleration to a state church is entirely changed. The state is the highest point, the fulfillment, of the demands of moral life, and it must be as free from the domination of church and priest as the religious life is from interference on the part of the state. He demands entire freedom as opposed to the half freedom of the Presbyterians. The source of power is with the people; this power is by them, for the general welfare, entrusted to the sovereign; there exists no divine right of kings to be tyrants; if kings misuse power, the people who gave it are at liberty and have the duty to take it back. He shows that the new republic rests on a firm historical foundation; it is not only genuinely English, but genuinely Protestant as well.

Milton's interests and plans during these seemingly quiet years bear a notable resemblance in national, educational, and religious import to the general plans of Hartlib's group of friends: the perfecting of a Latin grammar, the construction of a system of Christian theology based entirely on the

[1] Written before but published after the execution of Charles I.

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Bible, and the completion of the history of the English people, of which he had already written four books in which there breaks forth the strong patriotic feeling of the old Saxons, in the contention that the Norman conquest was never a real subjugation of the spirit of the people. All these plans were changed by Milton's sudden and unexpected call to public life (in March, 1649), as secretary of foreign languages to the Commonwealth. His predecessor in this office under Charles I had been Georg Rudolf Weckherlin, a talented German living in England since 1624, member of the "Akademie zur Tanne,"[1] a friend of Hartlib, Haak, Pell, and Dury.[2] Later Weckherlin was reappointed as Milton's assistant. Haak seems also at times to have been of service to the foreign secretary in translating documents into Dutch.[3]

One of the most influential men with whom Milton was now associated was Sir Henry Vane. An idealist like Milton, he was filled with the hope that a happy era had now dawned for England. Their agreement regarding the offices of church and state Milton celebrates in his sonnet to Vane:

> "To know
> Both spiritual power and civil, what each means,
> What severs each, thou hast learned, which few have done;
> The bounds of either sword to thee we owe;
> Therefore, on thy firm hand religion leans
> In peace, and reckons thee her eldest son."

Vane's devotion to public service and his freedom from corruption were as well known as his great ability. But

[1] *M. C. G.*, IV, p. 76.
[2] Stern, I, 26.
[3] Stern, p. 27. Interested in Dury's plans at least since 1634. See "Bibliothek des Literarischen Vereins in Stuttgart," CCXLV, p. 76.

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some of his contemporaries found it difficult to understand his religious views, and his enthusiasm for mysticism exposed him to the reproach of fanaticism and to a notoriety (as in the case of Milton) of having a sect named after him. Vane was tolerant of all sects, and was particularly attracted to the Quakers.

Another friend whose devotion to kindred ideals must have influenced Milton's views on the great problems that Parliament and Cromwell with his soldiers had been trying to solve was Roger Williams. In 1631 Williams had emigrated to America, and had been chosen pastor of the congregation of Salem. He was driven from the colony, however, because he demanded unconditioned religious freedom and a complete separation of church and state, with equal rights for all, even for Jews and heretics. His extraordinary strength of religious interest found expression in his many pamphlets and treatises. "To destroy a single soul through false teaching," he maintained, "is a worse crime than to disperse a whole parliament or to slay an entire nation."[1] He founded Providence, 1636, and with a conscientiousness rare in English colonists paid the Indians for their land.[2] Other fugitives brought to this colony Baptist ideas, which Williams adopted. Soon, however, he found their teachings insufficient, and left the congregation never to join another church because he awaited further enlightenment regarding the essence of the true church of God. Through this step he became an exponent of the fundamental ideas of Independency and a significant forerunner of Quakerism. His doctrine of the "sovereign original and foundation of Civil Power in the People" appeared in his pamphlets scattered broadcast in England be-

[1] Baillie: *Letters*, II, p. 397.
[2] Weingarten, p. 37.

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fore the outbreak of the civil war. He speaks of his association with Milton during his second visit to England in 1651-1652: "The Secretary of the Council Mr. Milton for my Dutch I read him, read me many more languages."[1] Roger Williams had "very probably acquired the Dutch tongue and with it some of the principles which characterize his life's work, from the Dutch colonists who were scattered throughout the southern and eastern counties of England, and in London, the descendants of those who sought a refuge in England when Charles V. began his persecution of the Protestants in the Netherlands."[2]

In *Eikonoklastes* (1649) and the first and second *Defense of the People of England* (1649 and 1654), Milton expresses with prophetic ardor his final ideas about the unconditioned sovereignty of the people. In *Considerations touching the Likliest Means to remove Hirelings out of the Church* (1659), he works out his idea of absolute religious freedom and congregational church autonomy, a toleration extended to all Christian sects, among which however Catholics are for state reasons not included, since their religious and political tenets are inseparable.

The change in Milton's sympathy during these years from the Presbyterian to the Congregational viewpoint is clearly paralleled by the progress of stirring events in his time. A further development of his inner life along lines of the religion of enthusiasm is equally characteristic of his time, though less fully taken into account by his biographers. This development is nowhere more clearly apparent than in the growth of his conception of the poet. In his early poetry, "the relation of the Muse or Muses to the poet, as

[1] Narragansett Club Publications, VI, p. 258, Letters of Roger Williams.

[2] Straus: *Roger Williams*, p. 181.

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it appears in Milton, is much the same as that in Homer, Hesiod, and the later poets and imitators." [1] In the poems *On the Morning of Christ's Nativity* (l. 15) and *The Passion* (l. 4) he addresses the "Heavenly Muse." In *Lycidas* (l. 15) he invokes the

> "sisters of the sacred well
> That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring"

and "in imitation of Vergil or Moschus," bids the "Sicilian Muse" return (l. 133). In *Il Penseroso* (l. 47) he

> "hears the Muses in a ring
> Aye round about Jove's altar sing."

Imagination has now the office which later he gives to inspiration:

> "Befriend me night, best patroness of grief,
> Over the pole thy thickest mantle throw,
> And work my flattered fancy to belief,
> Though Heaven and Earth are coloured with my woe."
> *Passion*, ll. 29-32.

> "To our high-raised fantasy present
> That undisturbed song."
> *Solemn Music*, ll. 5-6.

> "Then thou our fancy of itself bereaving
> Dost make us marble with too much conceiving."
> *Shakespeare*, ll. 13, 14.

In his early prose writings we find not only the general Puritan belief in the inspiration of ministers of the Gospel, but also the belief in the possible inspiration of poets. On an equality with ministers he places the poet whose "abilities are the inspired gift of God, rarely bestowed, but yet to some (though most abuse) in every nation; and are of

[1] Osgood: *Classical Mythology of Milton's English Poems*, p. 57.

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power, beside the office of the pulpit, to inbreed and cherish in a great people, the seeds of virtue and public civility; . . . to celebrate in glorious and lofty hymns the throne and equipage of God's almightiness, and what he works, and what he suffers to be wrought with high providence in his church . . . Nor [is this gift] to be obtained by the invocation of dame memory and her siren daughters, but by devout prayer to that Eternal Spirit, who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out his seraphim, with the hallowed fire of his altar, to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases." [1]

In his later poetry we find, along with many references to the traditional Muses, his final conception of the poet as a truly inspired oracle whose Muse is the Holy Spirit of God. We will return later to this point.

The change in religious sympathy is shown in the *Eikonoklastes*. Milton expresses his objection to set forms of prayer,—an objection in which all the sectarians and separatists were agreed: "This is evident, that they who use no set forms of prayer, have words from their affections; while others are to seek affections fit and proportionable to a certain dose of prepared words; which as they are not rigorously forbid to any man's private infirmity, so to imprison and confine by force, into a pinfold of set words, those two most unimprisonable things, our prayers, and that divine spirit of utterance that moves them, is a tyranny that would have longer hands than those giants who threatened bondage to heaven." [2] "God is no more moved with a prayer elaborately penned, than men more truly charitable are moved with the penned speech of a beggar." [3]

[1] Prose Works, II, p. 479: *Reason of Church Government.*
[2] Same, I, p. 431: *Eikonoklastes.*
[3] Same, I, p. 462.

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The Scriptures become more and more Milton's final authority. He reminds members of Parliament of their duty "to assert only the true Protestant Christian religion, as it is contained in the Holy Scriptures" and he asserts "that we can have no other ground in matters of religion but only from the Scriptures."[1] In his later years, moreover, Milton carried out his early plan of formulating for himself a system of Christian doctrine from the Scriptures alone. Willingly he advocates dependence on the "inner light," and submits his fallible reason to the sure information afforded by celestial light. "The gospel [is] to be interpreted only by the sense of charity and inward persuasion."[2] "No protestant therefore, of what sect soever, following Scriptures only, which is the common sect wherein they all agree, and the granted rules of every man's conscience to himself, ought by the common doctrine of protestants to be forced or molested for religion."[3] "God compels by the inward persuasive motions of his spirit."[4] Any man may become a minister of God, since "the Gospel makes no difference from the magistrate himself to the meanest artificer, if God evidently favor him with spiritual gifts."[5] "It is a fond error, though too much believed among us, that the university makes a minister of the gospel."[6] Moreover, it was no lifeless belief in the Scriptures that Milton was insisting upon; far more important than the outer word was the inner word of the Spirit. This is the

[1] Prose Works, II, pp. 521, 523: *Treatise of Civil Power in Ecclesiastical Causes.*
[2] Same, II, p. 537.
[3] Same, II, p. 532: *Treatise of Civil Power,* etc.
[4] Same, p. 538.
[5] Same, III, p. 40: *Consideration How to Remove Hirelings,* etc.
[6] Same, III, p. 36.

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point in which the poet was inseparably linked to what was, since 1644, the fundamental thought of Independency.

In addition to unscriptural views of predestination and election Milton has been accused of heterodox teachings regarding the divinity of Christ, in *Paradise Lost, Paradise Regained,* and, most of all, in the *Christian Doctrine.*[1] The expressions in his earlier works regarding the Trinity are unquestionably orthodox.

> "That glorious form, that light unsufferable,
> And that far-beaming blaze of majesty,
> Wherewith He wont at Heaven's high council-table
> To sit the midst of Trinal Unity."[2]

"Thou, therefore, that sittest in light and glory unapproachable, Parent of angels and men! next, Thee I implore, Omnipotent King, Redeemer of that last remnant, whose nature Thou didst assume, ineffable and everlasting Love! And Thou, the third subsistence of divine infinitude, illumining Spirit, the joy and solace of created things! One Tripersonal Godhead! look upon this thy poor and almost spent and expiring Church."[3]

The change in Milton's views from strict orthodoxy to complete toleration, to a disregard for denominational lines and an utter dependence on the "inner light," is accompanied by his changed attitude toward the "visible church." Bishop Newton remarks "that in the latter part of his life Milton was not a professed member of any particular sect of Christians, that he frequented no publick worship, nor used any religious rite in his family. Whether so many different forms of worship as he had seen had made him indifferent to all forms; or whether he thought that all Chris-

[1] Todd: *Life of Milton,* p. 323.
[2] *Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity.*
[3] Prose Works, II, p. 417: *Of Reformation in England.*

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tians had in some things corrupted the purity and simplicity of the Gospel; or whether he disliked their endless and uncharitable disputes and that love of dominion and inclination to persecution which he said was a piece of popery inseparable from all churches; or whether he did not look upon himself inspired, as wrapt up in God, and above all forms and ceremonies; it is not easy to determine: to his own master he standeth or falleth: but if he was of any denomination, he was a sort of *Quietist,* and was full of the interior of religion, though he so little regarded the exterior." [1] It has been suggested that Milton's blindness and other infirmities might be in part his excuse for frequenting no place of public worship. Certain it is that his daily employments were always ushered in by devout meditation and study of the Scriptures.

Such a life of religious meditation, however, of regard for the inner religion and disregard for its outer forms, of Quietistic contemplation, was developed in the sectarian life of England after Cromwell's final assumption of the authority that had rested with the "Parliament of Saints"; it is the religious life we should expect of a student of Jakob Boehme. Such a life was exemplified by the Quakers, the Philadelphists, the members of the "Theosophical Rosicrucian Brotherhood" that emigrated to Pennsylvania. Such a life is reflected in the religious convictions of Milton's friend, Roger Williams, with whom he may have read Boehme's writings in Dutch, since most of them were published very early in that language. Todd suggests, as an explanation of the change of view in Milton's later writings, that "he drank largely perhaps from the turbid streams" of the "Arian and Socinian pieces published in Holland

[1] Todd, p. 333.

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and dispersed in England."[1] These convictions were likewise held by Henry Vane, who was undoubtedly influenced by the writings of Jakob Boehme.

Milton might have seen German copies of Boehme's works brought to England by fugitives from the Thirty Years' War. There is evidence that the poet included among his linguistic accomplishments the ability to read German.[2] Dr. Pagit, Milton's physician and friend, intimate likewise in the household of the Quaker Isaac Pennington, recommended the young Quaker Thomas Ellwood,[3] who read to the blind poet and to whom is ascribed the suggestion that resulted in *Paradise Regained.* Milton's large circle of German friends were, moreover, the practical carriers of many ideas that Boehme embodied in his philosophy.[4] And it is beyond question that Hartlib at least was intimately acquainted with the teachings and writings of Boehme.

Among the comparatively few state papers that Milton preserved from his secretaryship and prepared for publication is an address to Parliament in 1653 by Mr. Samuel Herring, which shows in the matters suggested for the "honorable considerations" of the members a striking similarity to Milton's views: "That it may be lawfull for all men, of what degree or quality soever, to teach the word, according to there light, and the spirit's illumination, and to settle themselves in the ministry, giving good testimony of there inward call thereunto by the spirit.

"That liberty of conscience, in matters of religion, should be freely granted to all people, provided they submitt, and

[1] Todd, p. 322.
[2] Stern: *Life of Milton,* III, p. 31.
[3] Masson, VI, p. 469.
[4] See above, pp. 65, 89.

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shall live quietly and peaceably, under the government of this Commonwealth; for religion is soe difficult and tender, that it is beyond man's reach, rightly to judge of it.

"That all possible meanes should be used for uniting the clergie throughout the land into one universall body, soe that they should lay asyde all there writing bookes and disputations; they should only labour after unity, peace and concord.

"That two colledges in each university, shall be sett apart for such as shall wholly and solely apply themselves to the studdy of attaining and enjoying the spirit of our Lord Jesus, to which study needs few bookes, or outward humane helps (for all lyeth in man's willinge and yeeldinge himselfe up to his inward teacher) soe that only the holy scriptures would be sufficient, but that the noble mind of man soaringe beyond the letter, or rule held out from the same, therefore the workes of Jacob Behmen, and such like, who had true revelation from the true spirit, would be great furtherance thereunto; and none but the holy scriptures, and such bookes aforesaid, should be used in thee colledges, all in English. This study rightly attained, would confute and confound the pride and vaine glory of outward humane learning, strong reason, and high astrall parts, and would shew men the true ground and depth of all things; for it would lead men into the true nothinge, in which they may behold and speculate all things, to a clear satisfaction and contentednesse."[1]

Is it possible that Milton heard no mention of Boehme, not among his German friends who shared Boehme's progressive ideas, nor among his religious friends whose doctrines were supported by Boehme's teachings, nor among his political friends in whose army Boehme was read?

[1] State Papers, pp. 99, 100.

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Through his connection with the academy spirit of his time, with the movement of Independency and of religious toleration, Milton was being unconsciously led to an interest in Boehme, whose writings he might have come across in English or German any time after 1644. It will now be our task to show that such an interest really did exist.

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CHAPTER V

SIMILARITY BETWEEN MILTON AND BOEHME IN RELIGIOUS, PHILOSOPHICAL, AND POLITICAL IDEAS

As Shown in "Paradise Lost," "Paradise Regained," and "Christian Doctrine"

Interpreters of Milton agree that he was not exclusively Platonic, Hellenic, Hebraic, medieval, nor modern, yet so strong has been the traditional belief in his classicism that the other formative elements of his lifework have hardly received just appreciation. Every discussion of the Hebraic and medieval elements has overlooked one fact; these two elements were fused in the new humanism of the seventeenth century that transformed the curious interest in the individual into a reverent love for the race. If Milton is not to be considered in the narrower sense either classicist or romanticist, what facts really explain his evident sympathy with two such widely differing views of the universe? His poetry exemplifies the necessary relation between a definite philosophic purpose and art; his imagination is inspired only to raise the soul of man to ever higher purpose and endeavor. This breadth and clarity of vision separates Milton from the brilliant men of the Renaissance, to whom he is so closely related through his enormous store of classical learning. To the intellectuality of true classicism he added not only a deep and reverent interest in each human

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being but also an implicit faith in the inherent power of all humanity to develop and press forward according to the eternal truths of life. These truths are found in and above this life; through them all actions take place, not as men sometimes suppose, in contradiction, but in an eternal, all-inclusive harmony. The intimate relation of this teaching to life itself was Milton's legacy to after-times; it had been Boehme's legacy to Milton. In becoming secretary to the Commonwealth Milton had identified himself with the movement of democracy; he was willing to stake his life in becoming officially associated with that man of the people, Oliver Cromwell. The people's great prophet of democracy was Boehme. In this excited time, saturated with the feeling of democracy and its hopes, Jakob Boehme, simple, sincere man of the people, shoemaker, tradesman, seemed, as did Christ and the apostles, a God-inspired prophet of the people. Some of Boehme's ideas were absolutely expressive of the popular feeling—ideas of opposition to a university-made clergy, to unjust princes, to war, belief in feeling as the basis of religious life, in the necessity of true regeneration, of the "inner light." There was of course much in Boehme that these ardent disciples had never grasped and made no attempt to understand. But Milton penetrated into "the Teutonic philosophy," beneath the veil of language that obscured its meaning, and became one of the first to share Boehme's true *Weltanschauung*.

The acceptance of the belief in the "inner light," and the conception of the divinely inspired poet—so opposed to the traditional idea of poetic inspiration of which we have spoken—marks the change in spirit and method between Milton's earlier and later poetry. In his later years the poet became a man inspired by God, in his blindness seeing,

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because dependent wholly upon the guidance of the light within.

> "So much the rather thou, Celestial Light,
> Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
> Irradiate; there plant eyes, all mist from thence
> Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
> Of things invisible to mortal sight."
>
> *P. L.*, III, 51-55.

His Muse is the Holy Spirit, the

> "Heavenly Muse, that on the secret top
> Of Oreb or of Sinai didst inspire
> That shepherd who first taught the chosen seed
> In the beginning how the heavens and earth
> Rose out of Chaos."
>
> *P. L.*, I, 6-10.

> "Thou Spirit, who led'st this glorious Eremite
> Into the desert, his victorious field
> Against the spiritual foe, and brought'st him thence
> By proof the undoubted Son of God, inspire,
> As thou art wont, my prompted song, else mute."
>
> *P. L.*, I, 8-12.

This poet feels the community of truth in the disparate elements of Hellenism and Christianity, but, with a consistency greater than in the earlier poems, ascribes to all the Ionian gods and their oracles a close relationship with the powers of evil. A consciousness of his lofty mission adds, in the later poems, a certain conciseness and severity to the sensuously beautiful descriptions of the earlier poems.

A first evidence of Milton's interest in Boehme is his choice of the full subject of his great poems *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained.* Much has been written, with undoubted fidelity to truth, regarding an indebtedness to Sylvester's translation of Du Bartas, Andreini's *Adamo,* Hugo Grotius' *Adamus Exul,* Vondel's *Lucifer,* Michael Angelo's pictured story of Adam and Eve in the

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Sistine chapel at Rome, and various other works on the same theme. In the fall of Lucifer, the creation of the earth, and the fall of the first human beings Milton was treating one of the most popular subjects of his time. The theme was fresh in the popular mind in the dramatic liturgical plays of the Middle Ages, and had been treated in Anglo-Saxon, Latin, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, French, Dutch, and English. That does not tell, however, how Milton really came to choose this particular theme. From the *Mansus* (l. 78) and the *Epitaphium Damonis* (ll. 155-178), written 1639, we know of his plans for a national epic or poem from British legendary history. In 1641 [1] he questions "what king or knight, before the conquest, might be chosen in whom to lay the pattern of a Christian hero" and suggests that the Scriptures also afford subjects, in the Song of Solomon and the Apocalypse of St. John. Also sketches from about the same time for a tragedy *Paradise Lost* are preserved.[2] The epic, which incorporated some of these early speeches, was begun about 1658 and finished 1663.[3]

Was it because Milton was "on evil days though fallen and evil tongues," that his work presents as its theme the origin and final overthrow of evil? In all of Boehme's larger works and in most of his pamphlets and epistles, the central theme, more or less elaborately worked out, is the origin of evil—not evil as confined to our human experience alone, but evil as a factor in the whole universe, its origin and final overthrow. In nearly every case Boehme gives a highly poetic and imaginative, yet philosophical, account of the fall of Lucifer followed by the fall of Adam

[1] Prose Works, II, pp. 478, 479.
[2] MS. in Trinity College, Cambridge.
[3] Stern, IV, p. 49.

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and Eve; the two "falls" are as inseparable in his mind as they are fundamental to the origin of evil in our world. Milton's *Paradise Lost* and *Regained* give not the mere story of the exile of Adam and Eve from the happy garden of Eden, but a poetic and philosophical discussion of the nature of God, the creation of the universe and the mundane sphere, the origin of evil, the creation, fall, and restoration of mankind—the subject-matter, in fact, of all of Boehme's writings. In these two poems of Milton and in his *Christian Doctrine* there is presented an almost complete system of philosophical and theological truth. We have Milton's views on (1) God—prima materia, (2) God —Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, (3) creation of angels, (4) origin of evil, (5) creation and fall of man, and (6) place of punishment. This is the order I shall follow in discussing the similarity between the views of Milton and Boehme.

(1) Milton thinks of the Godhead not as a personal God but as an abstract Power from whom all things proceed. He is manifested as the eternal Will (*C. D.*, I, p. 170), "the will and high permission of all-ruling Heaven" (*P. L.*, I, 211). "That the will of God is the first cause of all things, is not intended to be denied, but his prescience and wisdom must not be separated from his will, much less considered as subsequent to the latter in point of time. The will of God, in fine, is not less the universal first cause, because he has himself decreed that some things should be left to our own free will, than if each particular event had been decreed necessarily" (*C. D.*, I, p. 39).

The desire for self-expression resulted in the creation of the universe. This creation was not out of nothing (*C. D.*, I, p. 179), but *out of the essence of God:*

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"One Almighty is, from whom
All things proceed, and up to him return,
If not depraved from good, created all
To such perfection; one first matter all,
Endued with various forms, various degrees
Of substance, and, in things that live, of life."
P. L., V, 469.

There is no empty space, for God said

"Boundless the deep, because I am who fill
Infinitude; nor vacuous the space,
Though I, uncircumscribed, myself retire,
And put not forth my goodness, which is free
To act or not. Necessity and Chance
Approach not me, and what I will is Fate."
P. L., VII, 168.

This boundless space is called the "Abyss vast, immeasurable," "the unreal, vast, unbounded Deep."

"The secret of the hoary Deep—a dark
Illimitable ocean, without bound,
Without dimension, where length, breadth, and highth,
And time, and place, are lost."
P. L., II, 891.

The conception of the Abyss is personified, under the figures of "unoriginal Night and Chaos wild":

"Where eldest night
And chaos, ancestors of Nature, hold
Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise
Of endless wars, and by confusion stand."
P. L., II, 894.

"This wild Abyss,
The womb of Nature, and perhaps her grave,
Of neither Sea, nor Shore, nor Air, nor Fire,
But all these in their pregnant causes mixed
Confusedly, and which thus must ever fight."
P. L., II, 910.

"The wide womb of uncreated Night,
Devoid of sense and notion."
P. L., II, 151.

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Since Nature is created a part of God, "God and Nature bid the same" (*P. L.*, VI, 174), and "God is all in all" (III, 341).

According to Boehme, God is pure uncorporeal spirit, the power, potentiality, and eternal foundation of all existence. "Men cannot say of God, that he is this or that evil or good, which hath distinction in itself, for he is in himself natureless as also affectionless and creatureless. He hath no inclination to anything, for there is nothing before him to which he should incline, neither any evil or good. He is in himself the Abyss [or Chaos], without any will at all; in respect of nature and creature, he is as an Eternal Nothing. . . . He is the nothing and all things; and is one only will, in which lieth the world and whole creation."[1] "God is to be considered, as to what he is, without nature and creature in himself, in a self-comprehensible Chaos, without ground, time, and place."[2] This Chaos is the *Mysterium Magnum,* out of which light and darkness, that is the foundation of Heaven and Hell, is shown from eternity and made manifest, a chaos, because good and evil arise out of it, viz., "light and darkness, life and death, joy and grief, salvation and damnation."[3]

(2) This eternal foundation of all being is to be understood as eternal will with a desire for self-comprehension, self-expression through its own existence. "The first only will, without a beginning, begets in itself a comprehensible will which is Son to the Abyssal Will, when the nothing makes within itself into a something wherein the Abyss con-

[1] *Election,* chap. i, §§ 4-8. See *Three Prin.,* chap. iv, §§ 31-46, *Myst. Magn.,* chap. i, § 2.
[2] *Election,* chap. i, § 20.
[3] *Clavis,* pp. 48, 50.

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ceives [forms] itself into a Byss, and the issue of the Abyssal Will through the conceived Son is called Spirit; and that which is issued is the delight wherein the Father ever finds and beholds Son and Spirit, and it is called God's Wisdom, or contemplation." [1] "Therein lie all things as a divine Imagination, wherein all ideas of angels and souls are seen eternally in divine likeness, not as creatures, but as a reflection; as when a man beholds himself in a mirror." [2]

Boehme thus marks the division of this spirit into Father, Son, and Spirit,[3] but as he elsewhere names them, the Father as wrath-fire, the Son as light of love, and the Spirit as the living power and virtue of both, they do not approach very near to the Christian conception of the Trinity. It is only in his relation to man as mediator and redeemer that Christ, Boehme's "second principle," seems first to gain a distinct personality, and here he becomes a subordinate power, obedient to God. "Behold the innocent man Christ was set in our stead, in the anger of the Father; he must reconcile not only all that which Adam had made himself guilty of, by his going forth from paradise into the kingdom of this world, and so fell foully in the presence of God and was scorned of all the devils; but he must make atonement for all that which was done afterwards and which is still done or will be done by us." [4] The Holy Spirit or third principle fashions the world for which the Word or second principle contributes the material; the third principle comes to reality and activity only in the creation of the world [5] and is that "in which the seven properties of nature, or seven

[1] *Election*, chap. i, §§ 10-17.
[2] *Clavis*, p. 43.
[3] *Myst. Magn.*, chap. vii, §§ 6-8, 9-12.
[4] *Three Prin.*, chap. xxv, § 52.
[5] *Three Prin.*, chap. ix, §§ 33, 36.

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forming spirits, introduce themselves into a substance "[1]— that is, corporeal nature.

While Christ is spoken of by Milton as if he were "very God," he is nevertheless not on an equality with God the Father; the conception of Godhead as a Triune manifestation of the same essence is not mentioned in *Paradise Lost*. In the *Christian Doctrine* (I, pp. 79-81) the internal efficiency or will of God is contrasted with the "external efficiency or generation whereby God, in pursuance of his decree, has begotten his only Son" by whom afterward all other things were made in heaven and earth; the Father and Son are different persons. Christ had a definite temporal beginning,

> "Of all creation first,
> Begotten Son, divine similitude,
> In whose conspicuous countenance, without cloud
> Made visible, the Almighty Father shines,
> Whom else no creature can behold."
>
> *P. L.*, III, 383.
>
> "This day have I begot whom I declare
> My only Son."
>
> *P. L.*, V, 603.

To the Son "all regal power is given" (V, 739). Christ's statement, "I and my Father are one," means one, "not in essence, but in love, in communion, in agreement, in charity, in spirit, in glory" (*C. D.*, I, p. 92). "Christ could never have become a mediator, nor could he have been sent from God, nor have been obedient to him, unless he had been inferior to God and the Father as to his nature" (*C. D.*, I, p. 114).

The Holy Spirit is spoken of as the "Comforter who shall dwell within men" (*P. L.*, XII, 498)—the Spirit of God, promised alike and given to all believers (*P. L.*, XII, 519).

[1] *Election*, chap. iv, §§ 10-19.

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It is the Holy Spirit who inspires the poet; he is the "inner light," the light celestial in man. Yet he is not God; for, "although the Holy Spirit be nowhere said to have taken upon himself any mediatorial functions, as is said of Christ, nor to be engaged by the obligations of a filial relation to pay obedience to the Father, yet he must evidently be considered as inferior to both Father and Son, inasmuch as he is represented and declared to be subservient and obedient in all things" (*C. D.*, I, p. 158). "He was created or produced by the substance of God, not by a natural necessity, but by the free will of the agent, probably before the foundations of the world were laid, but later than the Son and far inferior to him" (*C. D.*, I, p. 169).

Such, then, is the Godhead out of whom and by whom the universe was created. With Boehme this entire creation depends upon the principle that "if everything were only one, that one could not be revealed to itself."[1] When there is to be light, there must first be a fire; fire bears the light and the light reveals the fire to itself.[2] Thus wrath can become apparent only through love, and love only through wrath.[3] So there is in God an eternal contrariety or opposition of forces, through the interaction of which "eternal nature" or the universe evolves. "All things consist in Yes or No, whether Godly, Devilish, earthly, or whatsoever it may be called. The One, as the Yes, is pure power and life, and is the truth of God or God himself. But God would be unknowable to himself, and would have in himself no joy, perception, or exaltation without the No. The No is the opposite to the Yes or the truth. In order that the truth may be manifest as a Something, there must

[1] *177 Theos. Quest.*, p. 3, § 6.
[2] *Myst. Magn.*, chap. xl, § 3.
[3] *Myst. Magn.*, chap. iv, § 19, chap. v, § 7, chaps. viii-x.

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be a contrariety therein."[1] This our world, "with all that belongs to it, as well as man, is created as an out-birth, out of the eternal nature: and God hath created it for no other cause, but that he would, in his eternal wisdom, manifest the wonders which are in the eternal nature."[2]

(3) The angels, according to Boehme a part of the balance and harmony in God, "were created in the first principle, and enlightened from the light of God, that they might increase the paradisical joy and abide therein eternally. All they do is an increasing of the heavenly joy, and a delight and pleasure to the Heart of God, a holy sport in paradise; to this end God created them, that he might be manifested and rejoice in his creatures and the creatures in him."[3]

The angels of *Paradise Lost,*

"Sons of light, with songs
And choral symphonies, day without night
Circle his throne rejoicing." V, 161.

"Solemn days they spend
In song and dance about the sacred hill." V, 648.

"They eat, they drink and in communion sweet
Quaff immortality and joy." V, 637.

And

"As they please
They limb themselves and colour, shape or size
Assume, as likes them best, condense or rare."
VI, 351.

Boehme's angels are "all of them together a fitted Instrument of the eternal spirit of God in his joy."[4] Some angelical prince "begins in his rank or file a round, with his legions, with singing, sounding forth, dancing, rejoicing and jubilating. This is heavenly music, for here everyone

[1] *177 Theos. Quest.*, chap. iii, §§ 2, 4.
[2] *Threefold Life*, chap. iii, § 40.
[3] *Three Prin.*, chap. iv, §§ 65-66.
[4] *Election*, chap. iv, § 48.

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sings according to his quality, and the king rejoices and jubilates with his angels, to the honor of the great God, and to the increasing and multiplying of the heavenly joys, and that is in the Heart of God as a holy sport or play." [1] "When the heavenly music of the angels rises up, there rise up all manner of figures, shapes or ideas and all manner of colors. The angels are of various manifold qualities and have several colors and beauties." [2] They are not corporeal, but of a bright clear visible substance, as if it were material.[3] In heaven they sing the "paradisical songs of praise concerning the pleasant fruit in paradise which groweth in the divine power. Can this be no joy and rejoicing? And should not that be a pleasant thing, with the many thousand sorts of angels to eat heavenly bread, and to rejoice in their communion and fellowship?" [4]

(4) So far there is no evil in the universe. Both Boehme and Milton believe that evil is not in God and is not willed by God. But the visible world, evolved from God's eternal nature, a shadow of heaven,[5] is manifestly not wholly good. This is due to the fall of the angel Lucifer. This angel, according to Boehme, was "a prince and king over many legions, but he became a devil and hath lost the beautiful, bright, and glorious image. For he, as well as other angels, was created out of the eternal nature, out of the eternal indissoluble band, and hath also stood in paradise, also felt and seen the working of the holy Deity, the birth of the second principle (Christ),[6] and the confirmation

[1] *Aurora,* chap. xii, §§ 32-33.
[2] *Aurora,* chap. xii, §§ 34, 60.
[3] *Three Prin.,* chap. ix, § 18.
[4] *Three Prin.,* chap. x, §§ 15, 16.
[5] *P. L.,* V, 574-76; *Election,* chap. v, §§ 50-52.
[6] In *P. L.,* the Father announces the birth of his only Son to the Angels, among whom is Lucifer. V, 603.

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of the Holy Ghost; his food should have been of the Word of the Lord, and therein he should have continued an angel. But he saw that he was a prince, standing in the first principle, and so despised the birth of the Heart of God (Christ), and the soft and very lovely influence thereof, and meant to be a very potent and terrible lord; he despised the meekness of the Heart of God. He would not set his imagination therein, and therefore he could not be fed from the Word of the Lord, and so his light went out, whereupon presently he became a loathsomeness in paradise, and was spewed out of his princely throne, with all his legions that stuck to him. He also presently lost the image of God. Thus all things departed from him and he remained in the valley of darkness. He is shut up in the fire of the first principle, and yet he raiseth himself up continually, thinking to reach the Heart of God and to domineer over it. His climbing up in his will is his fall and the more he climbeth up in his will, the greater is his fall."[1] The second principle is extinguished in him; his being is out of "temperature" or harmony. The fire and light, the wrath and love were balanced until Lucifer exalted self, opposed God and became shut up in the principle of fire-wrath. Lucifer and his angels had free-will before their fall;[2] afterward they were obliged by their nature to do only evil.[3] With this compare *P. L.*, I, 159-162:

> "But of this be sure—
> To do aught good never will be our task,
> But ever to do ill our sole delight,
> As being the contrary to His high will
> Whom we resist."

[1] *Three Prin.*, chap. iv, §§ 65-71.
[2] *Threefold Life*, chap. viii, § 43.
[3] *Three Prin.*, chap. v, § 30.

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(5) This explanation of the origin of evil does not accord very closely with the usual orthodox Christian explanation which notes the fact that Eve was tempted by a *fallen* angel, but nevertheless attributes the real entrance of evil into the world to the fall of Adam and Eve. In Boehme's teaching strong emphasis is laid upon the fact that it was Lucifer's malice and envy that brought woe into this world. In Lucifer's fall, however, evil had not yet become an autonomous force. Milton and Boehme agree that God plans to make evil serve good, out of evil to create good.[1] Hence He can create man in Lucifer's stead, even though foreknowing that Adam will fall a victim to the same self-will that destroyed the proud angel. "When Lucifer fell he was thrust out into the first principle; and then the throne in the second principle was empty. In the same principle God created man, who should continue therein, and should be tempted to try whether that were possible; and to that end it was that God created the third principle [the Holy Spirit], in the place of this world, that man also (in the fall) might not become a devil, but that he might be helped again. As Milton has it (the italics are mine):

> "To him
> Glory and praise whose wisdom had ordained
> Good out of evil to create—instead
> Of spirits malign, *a better race to bring*
> *Into their vacant room*, and thence diffuse
> His good to worlds and ages infinite."
>
> *P. L.*, VII, 188.

Compare also XII, 470. Boehme, on the other hand, says: "Therefore the enmity of the devil against Christ is because he sitteth upon his royal throne. Thus the place of this

[1] "[The apostate's] evil
Thou usest, and from thence creat'st more good."
P. L., VII, 615.

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world is the throne and body of our Christ; and all is his own also; and the devil is our Christ's captive." [1] "For the kingdom of darkness must also have creatures. They are all profitable and useful to God." [2]

Boehme's Satan, "as he is called in heaven," hated man as well as Christ; having himself been a prince and hierarch and cast out for his pride, he envied man the glory of being created in and for the spiritual world, the place which he himself once possessed.[3] Milton's Lucifer exclaims

> "Behold instead
> Of us outcast, his new delight,
> Mankind created, and for him this world."
> *P. L.*, IV, 105.

He was

> "With envy seized
> At sight of all this world beheld so fair."
> III, 552.

> "Thus while he spake, each passion dimmed his face
> Thrice changed with pale ire, envy and despair."
> IV, 113.[4]

The clear-cut and distinct individuality of Milton's Satan that has led to the assertion that he is the hero of *Paradise Lost* is likewise characteristic of Boehme's Satan. The archangel Michael thus addresses Milton's Satan at the time of the war in heaven:

> "How hast thou instilled
> Thy malice into thousands, once upright
> And faithful, now proved false! But think not here
> To trouble holy rest; Heaven casts thee out
> From her confines; Heaven, the seat of bliss,

[1] *Three Prin.*, chap. xxv, §§ 103-4.
[2] *Election*, chap. viii, § 176.
[3] *Regeneration*, chap. ii, § 46. Also *Myst. Magn.*, chap. xv, § 19; chap. xvii, § 31.
[4] See also *P. L.*, I, 34; VI, 898.

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> Brooks not the works of violence and war.
> Hence, then, and evil go with thee along,
> Thy offspring, to the place of evil, Hell,—
> Thou and thy wicked crew!"
>
> *P. L.*, VI, 269-77.

With this compare Boehme's words to Satan (*Four Complexions*, chap. iii, p. 63): "Whence comest thou, thou black wretch? I thought thou hadst been in heaven, among the angels; how comest thou to be expelled from thence, and loaded with the register or catalogue of God's anger? I thought thou hadst been a prince in God; how art thou then become his executioner? Is so fair an angel become a base executioner? Fye upon thee; what hast thou to do with me? Away to the angels in Heaven, if thou art God's servant. Fye on thee, avaunt hence, thou servile executioner of God's wrath: Go to thine own angels; thou hast nothing to do here."[1]

A study of the means used by Satan in bringing about the downfall of his hated successors reveals another of Boehme's fundamental conceptions. The imagination plays a great rôle in his thought. It is the power or faculty

[1] This same comparison I found in the course of my study on this subject in a work by Julius Otto Opel (1864) on Valentin Weigel, the mystic whose works Boehme read. With no idea of the spread of Boehme's works in England or of the historical connection between the two men (Boehme and Milton), Opel makes the following striking statement in a note, p. 239: "Only Milton is to be compared with Boehme. Klopstock, in spite of his Messias, was of an entirely different nature. Boehme is a religious and political Puritan, even though his political inclinations are less apparent. It would give me great pleasure to compare the two writers, particularly from the aspect of their religious-philosophical views. Whole songs from Milton's *Paradise Lost* seem to find expression in Boehme's poetic prose. An assumption that Milton knew Boehme's writings, or at least similar tracts of German enthusiasts, must be given due consideration, although, so far as I know, it has not been brought forward."

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through which the will, accompanied by strong desire, effects any creation or change. "We apprehend the divine essence through the imagination."[1] "Sin maketh not itself but the will maketh it; it cometh from the imagination into the spirit."[2] Lucifer's own fall was brought about by his imagination when he set his will and desire toward increasing his own importance.[3] In like manner Adam's imagination brought him into sin.[4] Similarly Milton says:

> "The first sort by their own suggestion fell,
> Self-tempted, self-depraved; man falls deceived
> By the other first; man therefore shall find grace,
> The other, none."
>
> *P. L.*, III, 129.

Satan first attempts to poison Eve's imagination through a dream:

> "Him there they found
> Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve,
> Assaying by his devilish art to reach
> The organs of her fancy, and with them forge
> Illusions as he list, phantasms and dreams.
> Or if, inspiring venom, he might taint
> The animal spirits, . . . thence raise . . .
> Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires."
>
> *P. L.*, IV, 799.

Boehme says that man "is often like a toad, whose mind is so very venomous, that it poisoneth a tender or weak mind to the temporal death by its imagination."[5]

According to Boehme's account Adam and Eve were tainted in their imagination before the actual sin of eating

[1] *Incarnation*, pt. i, chap. vi, § 14; *Epistle V*, §§ 10, 13.
[2] *Forty Quest.*, no. 15, § 4.
[3] *Incarnation*, pt. i, chap. ii, § 28.
[4] Same, pt. i, chap. iv, § 60.
[5] *Three Prin.*, chap. xvi, § 21.

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the apple. At least a hint of this seems expressed in Adam's half-fatherly, half-scholastic discourse to Eve upon her dream; he has already a theoretical knowledge of evil:

> "Best image of myself, and dearer half,
> The trouble of thy thoughts this night in sleep
> Affects me equally; nor can I like
> This uncouth dream—of evil sprung, I fear;
> Yet evil whence? In thee can harbour none,
> Created pure. But know that in the soul
> Are many lesser faculties, that serve
> Reason as chief. Among these Fancy next
> Her office holds; of all external things
> Which the five watchful senses represent
> She forms imaginations, aery shapes
> Which Reason, joining or disjoining, frames
> All what we affirm or what deny, and call
> Our knowledge or opinion. . . . Yet be not sad;
> Evil into the mind of God or man
> May come and go, so unapproved, and leave
> No blot or blame behind."
>
> *P. L.*, V, 95.

Satan's second and successful attempt to gain control of Eve through her imagination takes place when he assumes the form of a serpent; he repeats the flattering words that he caused her to dream (V, 78) and tells her that she should "be seen a Goddess among Gods" (IX, 547).

> "These, these and many more
> Causes import your need of this fair fruit.
> Goddess humane, reach, then, and freely taste.
> "He ended; and his words, replete with guile,
> Into her heart too easy entrance won.
> Fixed on the fruit she gazed; which to behold
> Might tempt alone; and in her ears the sound
> Yet rung of his persuasive words, impregned
> With reason, to her seeming, and with truth."
>
> *P. L.*, IX, 730-38.

Boehme tells the same story in fewer words: "For the devil said the fruit would not hurt, but the eyes of her

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sharp understanding would be opened, and they should be as God; this Eve liked very well, that she should be a Goddess and wholly consented thereto; and in this full consent she fell from the divine harmony." [1]

The various results of man's fall are similarly treated by Boehme and Milton. Whereas before there has been "eternal Spring" (*P. L.*, IV, 268; X, 679) and "Spring and Autumn together hand in hand" (V, 394) now "the air must suffer change" (X, 212).

> "The sun
> Had first his precept so to move, so shine,
> As might affect the earth with cold and heat
> Scarce tolerable; and from the north to call
> Decrepit winter; from the south to bring
> Solstitial summer's heat."
>
> X, 651.[2]

Boehme says that "no heat nor cold had touched them if Adam had not fallen; there had also no winter been manifest upon the earth, for in paradise there was an equal temperature." [3] But they fell, and heat and cold seized upon them.[4] The fall "caused the earth to tremble, whereby the earth trembled also in the death of Christ and the rocks cleaved in sunder." [5] "And here the Heaven in man trembled for horror; as the earth quaked in wrath when his anger was destroyed on the cross by the sweet love of God." [6] In *Paradise Lost,*

[1] *Myst. Magn.*, chap. xx, § 25.
[2] See also *P. L.*, X, 687, 1056.
[3] *Myst. Magn.*, chap. xviii, § 13.
[4] *Epistle X*, p. 9; *Regeneration*, chap. ii, § 61; chap. iii, § 68; *Incarnation*, pt. i, chap. ii, § 53.
[5] *Threefold Life*, chap. xiv, § 46; *Three Prin.*, chap. xv, § 26; *P. L.*, X, 660; IV, 671.
[6] *Three Prin.*, chap. iv, § 28.

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"So saying, her rash hand in evil hour
Forth reaching to the fruit, she plucked, she ate.
Earth felt the wound, and nature from her seat
Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe,
That all was lost."

P. L., IX, 780.

"Earth trembled from her entrails as again
In pangs, and nature gave a second groan;
Sky low'red; and muttering thunder some sad drops
Wept, at completing of the mortal sin
Original."

IX, 1000.

Still further beliefs regarding the nature of mankind are similar. Both writers had faith in decided influence of the stars upon all life:[1] Boehme affirms that "the stars or constellations operate in man, and afford him the senses";[2] Milton speaks of the "sweet influence of the Pleiades" (*P. L.*, VII, 374) and the "happy constellations" (VIII, 512). Boehme personifies the divine element in humanity as the "divine virgin of wisdom," who controls all inspiration and knowledge of God in the human heart.[3] In his invocation of the Holy Spirit as his Muse, Milton represents the Holy Spirit as conversing with Eternal Wisdom:

"Descend from Heaven, Urania, by that name
If rightly thou art called, whose voice divine
Following, above the Olympian hill I soar,
Above the flight of Pegasean wing!
The meaning, not the name, I call; for thou
Nor of the Muses nine, nor on the top
Of old Olympus dwellst; but heaven-born,
Before the hills appeared or fountain flowed,
Thou with Eternal Wisdom didst converse,

[1] *Threefold Life*, chap. v, §§ 41-45; chap. vi, § 78; *Three Prin.*, chap. xiv, §§ 12, 85-87.
[2] *Myst. Magn.*, chap. xxiii, § 3.
[3] *Regeneration*, chap. iii, § 69.

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Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play
In presence of the Almighty Father, pleased
With thy celestial song."

P. L., VII, 1-12.

(6) The exultation of the devil over man's fall (*P. L.*, X, 460-67, *Three Prin.*, chap. xvii, § 63) and Satan's shame at his own fall (*P. L.*, IV, 42-45; IX, 163-167; *Election*, chap. iv, §§ 117-119) do not make hell any more pleasant, although the fire is "immaterial and eternal,"[1] and cannot consume the "imperishable heavenly essences"[2] of Satan's angels, fallen though they are. The fallen angels must dwell on in "darkness visible."[3]

"Void of light
Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
Casts pale and dreadful";[4]

or, according to Boehme, in "darkness absolute, their light only what shineth from their fiery eyes, like the glimmering of a flash of fire."[5] Boehme's Satan does not beat and torment his children, as some teach, but "they must do his will, and the anguish and horror of hell plague every one of them sufficiently in their own abominations."[6] These children of Satan "lost their beauteous form and image and became like serpents, dragons, worms, and evil beasts," as soon as the divine light was completely extinguished in them.[7] Milton's Satan and his angels became on a sudden a crowd of hissing snakes, after the temptation and fall of the happy pair had been accomplished.[8]

[1] *Three Prin.*, chap. x, § 47.
[2] *P. L.*, I, 138; II, 99.
[3] *P. L.*, I, 63.
[4] *P. L.*, I, 180.
[5] *Forty Quest.*, no. 34, § 1.
[6] Same, no. 18, § 25.
[7] *Three Prin.*, chap. iv, § 64.
[8] *P. L.*, X, 508-20.

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In spite of the poetic necessity of giving hell a definite location in space, Milton agrees with Boehme that "heaven and hell are within man." "There is nothing that is nearer you," says Boehme, "than heaven and hell."[1] He tells us that "if we will speak of our native country and tell of the resting-place of the souls, we need not cast our minds afar off; for far off and near is all one and the same thing with God; heaven and hell are everywhere all over in this world. Therefore the soul needeth not to go far; for at that place where the body dieth, there is heaven and hell."[2] God did not create a peculiar hell and place of torment, on purpose to plague the creatures, because he is not a God that wills evil. To turn away from God is to be in hell.[3] Milton asserts that

> "The mind is its own place, and in itself
> Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven."
> *P. L.*, I, 254.
>
> "Within him Hell
> He brings, and roundabout him, nor from Hell
> One step nor more than from himself can fly
> By change of place."
> IV, 19.
>
> "Then wilt thou not be loth
> To leave this Paradise, but shalt possess
> A Paradise within thee, happier far."
> XII, 585.

The name *Paradise Regained* has caused some difficulty to commentators. It has seemed odd to them that Milton should impute the recovery of Paradise to the short scene of our Saviour's life upon earth, and not rather extend it to His agony and crucifixion. The reason suggested is that "Paradise *regained* by our Saviour's resisting the

[1] *Three Prin.*, chap. ix, § 27.
[2] *Three Prin.*, chap. xix, §§ 62-67.
[3] *Threefold Life*, chap. ii, §§ 53, 54.

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temptation of Satan might be a better contrast to Paradise *lost* by our first parents too easily yielding to the same seductive spirit." [1] If the poetic plan of the two poems demanded, as some critics suggest, that the principle of evil which had been victorious in the first part should be overcome in the second, and that this be accomplished by the symbolic story of Christ's temptation, such a plan would nevertheless not be in harmony with the Christian doctrine, which places all emphasis upon the sacrificial aspect of Christ's death. This very point—Christ's salvation of man by overcoming temptation—Boehme makes most impressive; the conquest of the principle of evil is through *temptation withstood.* He calls the exposition of the new regeneration in Christ the " fairest gate or entrance of understanding [the most important spiritual truth] in the book " of the *Three Principles.*[2] A chapter is given here likewise to the Passion and Death of Christ, the only occurrence in Boehme's writings of such a discussion; in the other works the incarnation and birth of Christ and his temptation seem to be the important features. In the *Signatura Rerum* alone is the fact of Christ's death emphasized. It is true that the statement is made there and elsewhere that Christ's resistance to temptation was not sufficient for the full regeneration of mankind; nevertheless Boehme makes this resistance to temptation the determining fact. The scenes of the temptation, as Boehme relates them in his analysis, are the scenes represented in *Paradise Regained.* " That the Person of Christ, with his deeds and essence, might be rightly demonstrated to the reader, that he might apprehend it aright, I will therefore direct him to the temptation of Christ in the wilderness after his baptism. . . . Thou shouldest

[1] Masson: *Poetical Works of Milton,* p. 286.
[2] *Three Prin.,* chap. xxii, § 24.

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open thine eyes," Boehme continues, "and not speak like the spirit in Babel, which saith, We know not what his temptation was. Besides, they forbid him that hath eyes to see, none must search into it; if they do they are called enthusiasts and are cried out upon for novelists, such as broach new opinion and pretend to new lights, and for heretics. That temptation in the hard combat of Adam in the Garden of Eden, which Adam could not hold out in, here the worthy Champion went through with, and hath obtained victory, in his humanity in heaven, and over this world. Christ was set against the kingdom of the fierce wrath, to see whether this second Adam could stand, and set his imagination upon God and eat of the Word of the Lord. And there it was tried whether the soul would press into God or into the spirit of this world again. The earthly body must be hungry, that the soul might be rightly tempted. Christ rejected the earthly body and life and put his imagination into the Word of God, and then the soul in the kingdom of heaven was predominant, and the earthly body was as it were dead for the kingdom of heaven's sake. Then *the devil lost his right in the soul;* yet he said in himself, Thou hast a right in the earthly body." Therefore he tried the other two temptations, also without avail. For when "Christ had overcome in all the temptations, then he had wholly overcome till the last victory in death." [1]

> "Hail, Son of the Most High, heir of both Worlds,
> Queller of Satan! On thy glorious work
> Now enter, and begin to save mankind."
>
> *P. L.*, IV, 632-35.

Thus Milton ends his story, at nearly the close of *Paradise Regained.* There is no other source than Boehme from

[1] *Three Prin.*, chap. xxii, §§ 78-100.

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which he could have obtained this idea of the temptation. The coincidence is too strong to be merely accidental.

The question of the incompleteness of the poem has also been treated by various critics, in spite of the fact that there are no grounds for supposing that it was left unfinished; Milton published it himself and resented any suggestion that it was inferior to its great predecessor. However, if *Paradise Regained* is considered from the viewpoint of being a direct sequel to *Paradise Lost* and consequently the conclusive and final poetic expression of Milton's interest in Boehme's religious-philosophical teaching, this question represents no problem whatever. Boehme's plan of the universe included the restoration with the fall of man; the origin of evil presupposed the way back to good. In God all forces are in harmony; in evil some force becomes too strong and the harmony is destroyed. But only in Satan does this too-strong force absolutely crowd out its natural restraining opposites. In man some good is still present and may be brought to control. Paradise is for Boehme not so much a place as a condition, a state of mind and heart. The second of Milton's poems dealing with this condition of mind and heart represents the process by which mankind is brought back to his original state. The process is again one of temptation, as in the case of the fall of man; Christ becomes the Redeemer because in him the inheritance of every human heart, the "virgin of wisdom," comes to its own again. The line of "inner light," of direct communication with the origin of life, is re-established.

In giving to his second poem the name *Paradise Regained* Milton brings out this deeper meaning of the word paradise, the heaven within man. Thus Milton's conception of paradise is not a place where one's dreams come true,

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but a state, within the reach of humanity, in which man is truly the measure of all things of heaven and of earth. What man brings to his knowledge of the world is fully equal to what his senses give him. We seem to feel in this conception of paradise the foreshadowing of a deep philosophical system. In spite of Boehme's ardent piety and inwardness of religion, his interpretation of life was a departure from the orthodox belief in man as an essentially sinful creature whose existence here is but a preparation for real living hereafter. This departure from orthodoxy was felt by Boehme's contemporaries, who stubbornly opposed him whether they made any efforts really to understand his teachings or not.

The final similarity between *Paradise Regained* and Boehme's teachings is to be found in the delineation of the character of Christ. The objection has been made that Milton represents Christ in this poem as essentially human; that he utterly loses sight of Christ's divine nature.[1] Boehme's Christ, the second Adam, was like Adam before the fall, a perfect being; he was not a human being as we are human, because we are not born perfect, but he was also not yet divine, for he was the son of God only in so far as Adam was a son of God.[2] After the temptation Christ became entirely divine; then the virgin of divine wisdom (the divine element in man) espoused the soul of Christ in the Trinity.[3] This idea of Christ as the second Adam is biblical, of course, but it was first definitely used as a principle of theological dogma by Schleiermacher.

The formulation of a "body of divinity" had been one of Milton's plans several years before he became secretary

[1] Todd, p. 323.
[2] *Three Prin.*, chap. xxii, §§ 26-27.
[3] *Three Prin.*, chap. xxii, § 96.

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of the Commonwealth. Part of the task assigned his pupils at this time had consisted in writing dictations, suitable for this purpose,[1] from the works of various theologians. The *Christian Doctrine* is the final outcome of this plan, and is the work of Milton's maturest, possibly his last years.[2] The result, however, seems notably different from the original plan, since the *Christian Doctrine* is based, not upon the theology of contemporary or ancient writers, but upon the Scriptures alone. It represents one of the very first attempts toward a strictly biblical theology and is the more remarkable in a period in which exegetical studies had almost disappeared from the universities and scholasticism sought only the traditional authorities of dogma.[3] Equally remarkable is the fact that this work treats not only of dogma but of ethics, which the theologians of the reformed church of the seventeenth century almost entirely neglected. The ethical teachings and their character of practical rules for everyday life gave to Boehme's writings part of their great popularity. Again and again he insists that "God will require an account of all our doings and how we have kept house with his works."[4] Boehme's only authority is the Bible; he read the works of various men, he tells us, but received from them no help in determining our attitude toward the moral obligations of life. In his *Christian Doctrine* Milton's only authority is the Bible. In the dedication he defends himself against the charge of heresy in interpreting the Scriptures for himself. "It is only to the individual faith of each that the Deity has opened the way of eternal salvation and he requires that he who would be

[1] Stern, II, p. 398.
[2] Stern, IV, p. 147.
[3] Weingarten, p. 81.
[4] *Three Prin.*, Preface, § 6.

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saved should have a personal belief of his own" (*C. D.*, dedication, p. 2). The whole work seems in reality a defense of his attitude toward liberty and toleration and perhaps also of the religious views expressed in *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained,* with which there is perfect agreement.

So much for the similarity in religious and philosophical views between Milton and Boehme. It is to be noted also that there is the same striking similarity in their utterances regarding the political realm, centering about the principle of freedom of conscience.

"A true judge," according to Boehme, "is God's steward in the kingdom of this world; and that it might not be needful that God should always pour forth his wrath upon the people, therefore he hath put the sword into their hands to protect and defend the righteous, and to punish the evil. But if he turneth tyrant, and doth nothing but devour the bread of his subjects, and only adorneth his state and dignity in pride, to the oppression of the needy, and will not hear the oppressed, then he is an insulting, tormenting prince and ruler in the kingdom of Antichrist."[1] "Kings and princes shall be constrained to give an account of their subjects; how they have ruled and protected them; what kind of government they have used; why they have taken away the lives of many by tyranny; also why they have made war for their covetousness, and their pleasure's sake."[2] Milton may be thinking of Boehme's "true judge" when he says to Satan:

> "Unjustly thou deprav'st it with the name
> Of servitude, to serve whom God ordains,
> Or Nature; God and Nature bid the same,

[1] *Three Prin.*, chap. xxi, §§ 43-44. See also chap. xxi, §§ 32-33.
[2] *Forty Quest.*, no. 30, § 74.

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When he who rules is worthiest, and excels
Them whom he governs."

P. L., VI, 174-78.

Michael discourses with Adam concerning tyranny:

"Yet know withal
Since thy original lapse, true liberty
Is lost, which always with right reason dwells
Twinned, and from her hath no dividual being.
Reason in man obscured, or not obeyed,
Immediately inordinate desires
And upstart passions catch the government
From Reason, and to servitude reduce
Man, till then free. Therefore, since he permits
Within himself unworthy powers to reign,
Over free reason, God, in judgment just,
Subjects him from without to violent lords
Who oft as undeservedly enthral
His outward freedom. Tyranny must be,
Though to the tyrant thereby no excuse."

P. L., XII, 82-96.

Milton was

"not sedulous by nature to indite
Wars, hitherto the only argument
Heroic deemed."

P. L., IX, 27.

"O shame to men! Devil with devil damned
Firm concert hold; men only disagree
Of creatures rational, though under hope
Of heavenly grace, and, God proclaiming peace,
Yet live in hatred, enmity and strife
Among themselves, and levy cruel wars
Wasting the earth, each other to destroy."

IX, 496-502.

Boehme's opposition to war is even more outspoken, though he likewise permits self-defense. "When any fall to firing, killing with the sword, to undo people, ruin towns and countries, there is no Christ, but the anger of the Father, and it is the devil that bloweth the fire."[1] "He

[1] *Three Prin.*, chap. xxvi, § 16.

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that causeth and beginneth a war he is the devil's officer;" but "he that defendeth himself against his enemy, upon necessity, without any other intent or desire, is not against God."[1]

The opposition to a state church arises from the belief in inspiration and dependence upon the "inner light." "It became a custom," Boehme relates, "that every one was bound to come to the temple made of stones, and the Temple of God in Christ stood and stands very empty;—but when they saw the desolation in the disputations, they called councils, and made laws and canons which every one must observe upon pain of death. Thus the Temple of Christ was turned into temples made of stone, and out of the testimony of the Holy Ghost a worldly law was made. Then the Holy Ghost spake no more freely, but he must speak according to their laws; if any came that was born of God and taught by the Holy Ghost, and was not conformable to their laws, he must be a heretic."[2] A hired clergy is too apt to serve for mammon's sake, not from the impulse of the light within, for

> "he who receives
> Light from above, from the foundation of light,
> No other doctrine needs, though granted true."
> *P. L.*, IV, 288.

This results in a degenerate, worldly church.

> "Wolves shall succeed for teachers, grievous wolves,
> Who all the sacred mysteries of heaven
> To their own vile advantages shall turn
> Of lucre and ambition, and the truth
> With superstitions and traditions taint,
> Left only in those written records pure,
> Though not but by the spirit understood."
> *P. L.*, XII, 508-14.

[1] *Threefold Life*, chap. xii, §§ 42-43.
[2] *Three Prin.*, chap. xxvi, § 27.

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Boehme calls an uninspired pastor a thief. The constraint of certain set forms of worship is death to the spirit. Prayers especially must not be prescribed and uninspired, but spontaneous and free, as when Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden adore the God that made them.[1] Even sacraments are not indispensable.[2] The holy man holds no strife about religion; his church is in himself; he can dwell in the midst of sects and appear in their services without being bound or attached to any. He has but one knowledge and that is Christ in him.[3] Milton speaks the last word concerning the state church when he says that external force may never be employed in the administration of the kingdom of Christ which is the church.[4]

Coming from the same source as the opposition to a hireling clergy is the seemingly unrelated dislike of a learned or professional clergy. Both writers agree in the statement that the universities cannot make ministers of God.[5] Learning is opposed to the "inner light" because inspiration can never be a product of reason. It is interesting to note how little Milton is influenced by the philosophy of his famous contemporary Descartes. The Cartesian philosophy which needs the "natural light" to prove the fundamental assumptions of its rationalism is nevertheless a philosophy of reason; Milton considers reason the supreme faculty, yet he subordinates to the guidance of the "inner light" that most essential part of man, his intellectual life. Animals are not for Boehme and Milton the automata of the seventeenth-century philosophers, but creatures endowed with reason.[6]

[1] *P. L.*, IV, 724-735; V, 153-208.
[2] *C. D.*, I, p. 417.
[3] *Regeneration*, chap. vi, §§ 7, 151-163.
[4] *C. D.*, I, p. 303.
[5] *Threefold Life*, chap. xv, §§ 9-10; *C. D.*, I, p. 435.
[6] *P. L.*, IX, 558-59; *Three Prin.*, chaps. xvi-xxix.

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The virtue, civic as well as religious, upon which both Milton and Boehme lay most stress is that of "brotherly love." The true worship of God consists chiefly in the performance of good works;[1] these include, with the observance of inner devotion and church rites, the duties of man to his neighbor. "Brotherly or Christian love is the strongest of all affections,"[2] Milton asserts, and "friendship even takes precedence of all degrees of relationship."[3] "All is God's," says Boehme, "thou art a servant, and shouldst walk in love and humility towards God, and thy brother; for thy brother's soul is a fellow-member with thy soul, thy brother's joy in heaven with God is also thy joy, his wonders are also thy wonders."[4] "In all selfhood or own propriety there is a false plant; one brother should be the sovereign cure and refreshment to another, and delight and content his mind with the insemination of his love-will. There were enough in this world, if covetousness drew it not into a selfish propriety, and would bear good will to his brother as himself, and let his pride go, which is from the devil."[5] Milton maintains that this love should be extended as toleration to all who think differently in matters of religion.[6] Salvation is not open to the Christian merely, but to the heathen and the Turk as well. Boehme says: "If a Turk seek God with earnestness, though he walk in blindness, yet he is of the number of those that are children without understanding; and he reacheth to God with the children which do not

[1] *C. D.*, II, p. 1. Compare Boehme (*Incarnation*, chap. vi, § 80): "God needs no service or ministry: we should serve and minister one to another and love one another and give thanks to the great God."
[2] *C. D.*, II, p. 105
[3] *C. D.*, II, p. 106.
[4] *Forty Quest.*, no. 12, § 39.
[5] *Myst. Magn.*, chap. xxiv, § 21.
[6] *C. D.*, I, p. 444; II, p. 105.

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yet know what they speak: for it lieth not in the knowing, but in the will."[1] In perfect accord with this teaching of Boehme, Milton says: "All have not known Christ. We ought to believe that the perfect sacrifice of Christ may be abundantly sufficient, even for those who have never heard the name of Christ and who believe only in God."[2] Woman also comes in for a generous share of toleration. Boehme and Milton agree perfectly regarding her inferiority; the two are equally generous to her.

The belief in predestination favors the idea of a state church; the elect should have the government in their hands, to be able to determine the lives of those who are less favored by Divine Providence. Milton's opposition to this belief began, as we have seen, with the struggle of independency against Presbyterianism. The *Christian Doctrine* expresses his final views: "there is no particular predestination or election but only in general, or in other words, the privilege belongs to all who heartily believe and continue in their belief." This is fully in accord with Boehme's views and may have been one of the very things to attract Milton to his writings. The book on the *Election of Grace,* Boehme's strongest expression against predestination, was published in England in 1655.

[1] *Threefold Life,* chap. vi, § 21.
[2] *C. D.,* I, p. 49.

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CHAPTER VI

ROMANTICISM

We are not accustomed to think of Coleridge as pre-eminently an exponent of mysticism. Yet it is a fact that his attitude of mind and the main lines of his philosophy were clearly mystical. From early years, as Lamb tells us, Coleridge was steeped in the writings of the Neoplatonists. He even expresses a decided indebtedness to the works of the mystics, of Jakob Boehme in particular, one of the four "Great Men unjustly branded," whose vindication he planned sometime to write. Their works, he asserts, "acted in no slight degree to prevent my mind from being imprisoned within the outline of any single dogmatic system. They contributed to keep alive the heart in the head; gave me an indistinct, yet stirring and working presentiment, that all the products of the mere reflective faculty partook of death, and were as the rattling twigs and sprays in winter, into which a sap was yet to be propelled from some root to which I had not penetrated, if they were to afford my soul either food or shelter." [1]

In this confession of Coleridge there are expressed some of the essential elements of romanticism, particularly the insistence upon the feeling rather than the reason as the chief faculty of the poet. We shall not go amiss in assuming that the effect which Boehme had upon Milton was similar to his effect upon Coleridge and that for this reason Milton is to be

[1] Coleridge: *Biographia Literaria*, New York, 1882, p. 262.

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considered the forerunner, if not the actual beginner, of the romantic movement in English literature.

Critics and early interpreters of Milton seem to have been convinced—unconsciously perhaps—that some decidedly new element had appeared in his works. The eighteenth century opens with the critical writings of John Dennis (1657-1734). His point of view is interesting by reason of its manner of connecting Milton with the history of romanticism. Through Dennis the study of Milton became related to that quarrel between the ancients and the moderns in France, which constitutes, throughout the eighteenth century, a kind of prologue to the history of the idea of human progress—an idea playing an important part in the thought of that period. Dennis wanted a reformation of poetry. He maintained that poetry of a truly high order must spring from passion, and that right here the true reformation must begin. For him, passion meant, as for most writers of the eighteenth century, "exalted feeling." The deepest and loftiest passions are connected with religious feelings and a sacred theme. He distinguishes between "Greater poetry and Less." Milton's works, especially those dealing with religious themes, belong to the nobler order; *Paradise Lost* is the greatest poem ever written by man because it is based upon imagination and enthusiastic passion. Poetry, in fact, a product of the feelings rather than of the intellect, "seems to be a noble attempt of nature, by which it endeavors to exalt itself to its happy primitive state; and he who is entertain'd with the accomplish'd Poem, is for a time at least restor'd to Paradise." [1]

The next great critic to concern himself with Milton was Addison (1672-1719), who began publishing the *Paradise*

[1] Dennis: *The Advancement and Reformation of Modern Poetry*, 1701, p. 172. See also *The Grounds of Criticism in Poetry*, 1704.

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Lost papers in the *Spectator* because the poem was even then sufficiently well known to arouse further interest among the readers of the periodical. At the outset Addison assumes for Milton "the first place among our English poets." Though criticising him partly according to classic standards by comparing him with Homer and Vergil, like Dennis, Addison emphasizes the necessity of passion, and glorifies Milton as the one who has made the miraculous possible in the modern world.

If we are to try to analyze the spell that made the earlier half of the eighteenth century go Milton-mad, over *Paradise Lost,* and the second half of the century equally mad over Milton's minor poems, we must look at these works as a vindication of imagination over reason as the creative and motive force in poetry. This was part of Milton's legacy from Boehme, the one great mystic whom he knew; through Milton this legacy was passed on to those who followed in his footsteps.

The connection between mysticism and romanticism should not be difficult to find. The fresh current—loosely called romanticism—that swept through the literature of Europe during the latter half of the eighteenth century gives us a term that must be interpreted with extreme care. We must find some central thought, some common point of departure, for the tendencies we meet, tendencies so distinct, so conflicting, yet in the end often so closely connected, as the reawakening of religion and the revival of humor; the return toward the medieval past, and, at the same time, the return toward the ideals of Greek poetry and the simplicity of Greek imagination; the renewed love of external nature and the growing sense of a living bond between it and man, and the craving for the unrelated, the remote, and the supernatural; the cry for free development and dominion

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of the individual, and the cry of emotion and of a "return to nature." Starting from the bare reaction against the purely intellectual outlook of the Augustan age, the germ of the whole movement is to be found in the revolt of the emotions against the tyranny of the intellect. This is also the attitude of the mystic with his demand for individual freedom of utterance and of experience based on the emotional, the inner, rather than the "common sense" life. In the writings of many of the romanticists of England, France, and Germany. there is a strong vein of mysticism, of the feeling of the indissoluble unity of life, of the alikeness in all things, and many of these men were, like Milton, in some way influenced by Boehme.

The strong reaction against the intellectual view of poetry, a reaction which caused the pendulum to swing too far in the direction of emotion, was first expressed in England in the works of Thomson and Young. Both these men were, in their way of imagining and in their emphasis of the imagination, under the influence of the great pioneer Milton. To *Paradise Lost* was due, to an extent not yet fully realized, the change which came over European ideas in the eighteenth century with regard to the nature and scope of epic poetry. That work was the mainstay of those adventurous critics who dared to maintain, in the face of French classicism, the supreme rights of creative imagination over reason. Milton's influence on the German literature of the eighteenth century was hardly inferior to Shakspere's; Milton's name was a by-word in the controversy that brought about the first great progress of German poetry. He cast an equally strong spell over the pioneers of French romanticism, particularly in the first thirty years of the nineteenth century, moulding those who prepared the French mind for romanticism.

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From the Middle Ages down to the beginnings of the romantic school in Germany the classic inheritance of the epic spirit survived. To Milton as to other poets came the conscious desire to produce a national epic. But the seventeenth century was no time for the production of an epic. The powerful opposition of church and state in their conscious struggles for supremacy produced an atmosphere far removed from the simplicity and immediacy of feeling in which epic poetry arises. Milton's was the first and greatest of many such attempts in England, France, and Germany, but the time of the true epic had passed. Milton, however, was the poet who solved the epic problem as well as it could be solved and that was along romantic lines. The interest in the childhood of the race is not classic. The belief that the primitive conditions of the race as depicted in the Greek and Roman heroes were better than existing conditions is a result of the romantic spirit. The discovery of new countries and new peoples had wrought mightily in the hearts of nations wearied with culture and worn with life; these nations wanted to find the original primitive human race, that from it they might gain a new lease on life. *Paradise Lost* is part of this romantic longing for the original, the real man, unspoiled by court and king. This desire to return to the ideal conditions of the early life of mankind is one of the fundamental causes of the Utopian literature prevalent at this time, and one of the secrets of its great popularity. *Paradise Lost* pictures Utopia, in a certain sense; not the ideal society to which man is progressing, it is true, but the ideal state from which he came and which he has the power to revive within himself if he but will. The belief of Milton's time in the expected millennium had kept the idea of paradise ever before men's minds, until regain-

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ing paradise was the most natural thought in the world to them.

It would be both interesting and instructive if we might at this point compare Boehme's influence at the close of the eighteenth century upon the romantic school in Germany with his influence upon the English mind and character from the time of Milton through the period of English romanticism. We should have to compare Goethe, Jung-Stilling, Tieck, Novalis, Fouqué, Jean Paul, the Schlegels, Schopenhauer, Hegel, Schelling, Franz von Baader, with Milton, William Law and his follower John Byrom, Wordsworth, Coleridge, William Blake, Carlyle. Coleridge and Blake, men of sympathetic minds, with similar philosophies of life, who might have been close friends if they had enjoyed more than their one chance meeting,[1] both express their allegiance to Boehme. Wordsworth, whose mysticism is the Neoplatonism of Henry More, may have gained his interest in Boehme as well as some knowledge of him through More. Carlyle, deeply mystical by nature and education, had his Boehmenism at second hand from Thomas Erskine of Linlathen.[2]

In such a comparison we should note that the reawakening of the religious impulse, the deepening of the religious feeling in an attempt to make Christianity subjective, was closely connected, in Germany and England alike, with the rise of romanticism. The religious revival had shown itself in the general life of Europe, and most markedly in England, before it went into literature. Pietism in Germany and the evangelical movement in England helped greatly to prepare the ground for the reception of the new spirit in poetry, while the earlier English religious movement of the seven-

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 10th series, V, pp. 89, 135.
[2] C. F. E. Spurgeon: *Mysticism in English Literature*, p. 28.

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teenth century had laid the great foundation of the new spirit. The deep-seated purpose of those English sects to break down the slavery of superficial fashions and cramping customs and to restore individual responsibility, spiritual initiative, and personal autonomy reminds one strongly of the work of the Storm and Stress period in Germany. Man himself, his inherited divine rights, and his eternal destiny were put in place of sacred and time-honored systems. Among the Quakers, however, as often with other mystics, the ascetic impulse, which a dualistic theory has usually aroused in the minds of those who take religion seriously, tended to the esthetic and intellectual poverty that we find in place of the wealth of poetry that we should expect.

In addition to this reawakening of the religious impulse in close connection with romanticism, we should note further a changed attitude, especially on the part of poets and philosophers, toward mythology. The need felt by the German romanticists for a new, Christian mythology, as opposed to the old, classical mythology, had been supplied, in a great measure, by Boehme. In his poetic treatment of natural laws and phenomena, in his symbolic and allegorical interpretation of Christianity, Boehme had anticipated the scientific discoveries of modern times, and had prescribed the course for natural science in its peculiar task of helping to create the new mythology.[1] In the English-speaking world, the Christian mythology of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries came from the study of Milton, rather than from the study of the Bible. "Milton framed for himself not only a system of divinity but a system of mythology also,"[2] and that has become the inheritance of our time. As Huxley says, "It is not the cosmogony of Genesis, but

[1] Walzel: *Deutsche Romantik*, pp. 47-49.
[2] Robert Southey in *London Quarterly Review*, XXXVI, pp. 54-55.

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the cosmogony of Milton that has enthralled the world." [1] What Boehme did for the romanticists of Germany in this respect, Milton has done for the English-speaking peoples.

Marked features of the mystical thinking characteristic of the German romantic school are its impulsive radicalism and its prophetic tone. Milton is decidedly radical in his views on domestic and political freedom, and his utterances are prophetic as well. Fundamental to romanticism and particularly clearly expressed by Novalis is the conception of poet and philosopher combined to a higher unity, a type of absolute spiritual and intellectual leadership. Such a leader Milton became to his people in their struggles for freedom, just as later, during the period of liberation, in Germany poets like Körner and Schenkendorf entered the army. Milton, in fact, represents an entirely changed attitude toward the poet in England. From the mere entertainer, however welcome, of man's leisure hours, dependent upon the favor of princes, the poet rose to the high plane of instructor and uplifter of mankind, the friend and adviser of statesmen. Though his own ideals of a poet were very high, demanding even that the whole life of a poet should be a true and noble poem, the condition and spirit of his time rather than his own theory forced Milton, as a friend of statesmen and an officer of the Commonwealth, to play his serious and important rôle in the birth of freedom.

With the awakening of the love for external nature—the recognition of the bond between man and his environment—comes the lyric note of the romanticist with its longing, its melancholy, its love of nature and of music. It is a remarkable coincidence that melancholy, which plays such a rôle in music-loving Milton, should again play a great rôle

[1] Quoted in *Cambridge History of Literature*, VIII, p. 403.

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among the early English romanticists. This is not characteristic of *Il Penseroso* alone, for the spirit of melancholy, which even Henry More associated with creative imagination, the longing for paradise, for the unattainable, is a distinctive tone in *Paradise Lost*. The beginnings of the historical feeling may also be sought in Milton; he speaks of Spenser as his forerunner. None of the preceding English poets had this historical sense; Shakspere does not speak of his forerunners.

The renewed interest in Boehme on the part of the writers of the German romantic school was not really a rediscovery of the Teutonic philosopher, for from the time of his death Boehme had admirers, in Germany as in England, who spread his writings and teachings, until they came to Tieck and Novalis and others eminently fitted to appropriate and assimilate them. In his entire thought-content Boehme belongs to the romanticists. His whole conception of the world is imaginative; he compares the creation of the universe by God to the creative power of thought in man. His emphasis is ever upon the feelings, the inward subjective viewpoint. No English translation has been able to reproduce the picturesqueness of his language and figures. He is frankly simple and childlike; many of his similes are taken from his observation of children. His angels are like little children, "when they go in May to gather flowers; then they often meet together, then they talk and confer friendly, and pluck or gather many several sorts of flowers. Now when this is done they carry those flowers in their hands, and begin a sportful dance, and sing for the joy of their heart rejoicing! Thus also do the angels in heaven." [1]

One of the important aspects of the romantic movement lies in its attention to the history and further development

[1] *Aurora*, chap. xii, pp. 83-85.

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of the conception of genius. Though the belief in genius was transmitted from antiquity through the schools, the idea of a God-inspired man as a creator vying with God or carrying on the work of God dates back only to Boehme and to Milton. That there was in Boehme a Titanic, Promethean element, an element that later culminated in Goethe's *Prometheus,* was felt instinctively by some of the philosopher's orthodox opponents. Thus Croese, author of a history of the Quakers, discussing the influence which Boehme had upon this sect, says of his teaching that "it is truly no Christian theology, but a storming of heaven and a war of wild, inhuman, and frightful giants against the gods."[1] How strongly Boehme emphasized this creative activity of man is shown in the following quotation: "Now every man is a creator of his works, powers, and doings; that which he makes and frames out of his free-will, the same is received as a work of the manifested Word into each property's likeness. . . . The free-will is the creator or maker, whereby the creature makes, forms, and works."[2] This insistence upon the creative activity of man as poet grows into the romantic conception of genius which has always brought liberating power into the classic rules and traditions. To follow the history of the extensive discussion of the conception of genius in English literature from Dennis to Young will some day form an interesting chapter in the history of romanticism. If, after all, the romantic impulse did not gain such impetus in England as it did during the Storm and Stress period in Germany, the reason lies no doubt with English conditions and character. It is a remarkable fact, however, that in the discussions of Dennis and Addison, and afterwards of

[1] Gerhard Croese: *Quaker-Historie,* Berlin, 1696, p. 749.
[2] *Myst. Magn.,* chap. xxii, pp. 22-23.

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Young, the chief champions of genius, Milton is repeatedly mentioned next to Shakspere as the type of modern genius. Yet Milton, in spite of his insistence upon the "inner light," his belief in genius and inspiration, was hardly a "naïve" poet in Schiller's sense of the word. Milton's angels are not little children like Boehme's; his representative of man in the state of original innocence is an Adam who preaches learnedly to his audience of one. Nevertheless Milton is as much a romanticist as he is a classicist; it is not his purpose to imitate nature, but to give form to his own feelings, to the visions afforded by the light within.

Closely related to this conception of genius is the romantic idea of nature as revealed in the poetry of primitive nations. The carrying out of this idea led to the discovery that this genius must be national in character, and that this again is best revealed in the oldest national poetry. Milton's theme, the original state of mankind, directly anticipates the later interest of Addison and the early romanticists in primitive peoples and their songs and in the old English ballads. Utopia, paradise, the people, genius, romanticism—all of these conceptions are closely interwoven, and must have an important place in the interpretation of both Boehme and Milton.

The living stream of thought and life which, since the time of the reformation, had poured from Germany into England, had produced there the sixteenth-century separatistic attempts at church reform, and then, during the seventeenth century, increased by the spring of Boehme's genius, had worked so powerfully in the founding of sects and the development of the worth of freedom, turned back as a tide to Germany, and in the esthetic discussions of the Swiss critics centering around Milton and his genius, produced a Klopstock and the German *Messias*. The same

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stream carried the discovery of enraptured genius, the embodiment of creative power, from Young to Hamann and Herder, through whom it became a rushing cataract resounding with the praise of the creative power and the enthusiastic rapture of genius in the Storm and Stress period. Like an ocean it swept along, carrying the discovery of the folksong, of the people, of the human heart, into the German romantic school, where, ripened and refined, the humanism of Neoplatonism in the teachings of Jakob Boehme was again prepared to start on its life-giving mission into the world.

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JAKOB BOEHME

I. List of Jakob Boehme's Works in the Order in which He Wrote Them

1612. (1) The Aurora [unfinished]. With notes added by his own hand in 1620.

1619. (2) The Three Principles of the Divine Essence. With an Appendix concerning the Threefold Life of Man.

1620. (3) The Threefold Life of Man.
(4) Answers to Forty Questions concerning the Soul, proposed by Dr. Balthasar Walter. With an Appendix Concerning the Soul and its Image, and of the Turba.

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(5) The Treatise of the Incarnation; in three parts. (i) Of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. (ii) Of the Suffering, Dying, Death, and Resurrection of Christ. (iii) Of the Tree of Faith.

(6) A Book of the Great Six Points. Also a small book of other Six Points.

(7) Of the Earthly and of the Heavenly Mystery.

(8) Of the Last Times. (2 Epistles to P[aul] K[eym], included in (32)i.)

1621. (9) De Signatura Rerum.

(10) Of the Four Complexions.

(11) Two Apologies to Balthasar Tylcken; (i) for the Aurora, (ii) for Predestination and the Incarnation.

(12) Considerations upon Esaiah Stiefel's Book concerning the Threefold State of Man, and the New Birth.

1622. (13) A Book of True Repentance.

(14) A Book of True Resignation.

(15) A Book of Regeneration.

(16) An Apology in answer to Esaiah Stiefel concerning Perfection.

1623. (17) A Book of Predestination and Election.

(18) A Short Compendium of Repentance.

(19) Mysterium Magnum.

(20) A Table of the Divine Manifestation, or an Exposition of the Threefold World.

1624. (21) The Supersensual Life.

(22) Of Divine Contemplation or Vision [unfinished].

(23) Of Christ's Testaments, viz.: Baptism and the Supper.

(24) A Dialogue between an enlightened and an unenlightened Soul (or the Discourse of Illumination).

(25) An Apology in answer to Gregory Richter [i.e., for the Books of True Repentance and True Resignation].

(26) 177 Theosophic Questions, with answers to 13 of them [unfinished].

(27) An Epitome of the Mysterium Magnum.

(28) The Holyweek or a Prayer Book [unfinished].

(29) A Table of the Three Principles.

(30) A Book of the Last Judgment [lost].

(31) The Clavis.

1618-1624. (32) 62 Theosophic Epistles. (i) 35 Epistles. (ii) 25 Epistles. (iii) 2 other Epistles [7 & 20 in Ger. ed.], one prefixed to Supersensual Life (21), the other as Preface to Second Apology to B. Tylcken.

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INDEX

Absolute, the, 2, 6, 43
Academy, 7, 18, 19, 20, 22, 63, 64, 72, 76, 81, 82, 103, 104, 117, 118, 136
Addison, 171, 172, 179, 180
Agrippa, Cornelius von Nettesheim, 10, 13, 50, 78
Ainsworth, Henry, 38
Albertus Magnus, 10
Alchemy, 2, 8, 10, 11, 13, 17, 29, 44, 49, 50, 52, 76, 80, 81, 83, 84, 92, 96
Althaus, 120*
Anabaptists, 14, 15, 34, 36, 37, 41, 43, 45, 54, 55, 64, 67, 94, 97, 104. See *Baptists*
Anderdon, John, 98
Andreae, Johann Valentin, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 68, 69, 71, 85, 121
Angels, 8, 95, 141, 147
Anti-Christ, 42
Antilia-Macaria, 73, 75
Antilians, 76
Antinomians, 54, 55
Aquinas, Thomas, 3, 4
Aristotle, 61
Arminianism, 55
Arndt, Johann, 12, 15, 18, 20, 97
Arnold, Gottfried, 13*, 17*, 96
Arnoldus, Villanovanus, 10
Ashmole, Elias, 79, 79*, 95
Astrology. See *Magic*
Aubrey, 79
Audland, John, 101
Augustine, Saint, 3, 4, 45

Baader, Franz von, 175
Bacon, Francis, 22, 62, 71, 80
Bacon, Roger, 10
Baker, the Venerable Augustine, 47
Baillie, 41, 54, 127*
Baptism, infant, 54, 102*
Baptists, 38, 115
Barclay, Robert, 100, 100*, 103*
Barker, C. J., 59*, 60*
Bayley, William, 101, 102*
Baxter, Richard, 94, 96, 97, 98, 99, 111
Beale, 72
Begemann, 17*
Berens, 113*
Berge, von, 122
Berkeley, 81
Bernard, Saint, 3, 4, 45, 46
Bernegger, 18, 22
Bernhard de Trevigo, 10
Betkius [Beets], 77, 85*, 88
Bible, 3, 11, 12, 15, 41, 43, 70, 108, 133, 135, 163
Birch, 71*, 72*
Blake, William, 175
Blunden, 56, 60, 62, 95
Boehme, A. W., 36*, 56*, 78*, 99*
Boehme, 25, 26, 27, 57, 61, 62, 88, 98, 114
  academies, 81
  alchemy, 30, 78, 82, 90, 107
  Antilians, 76, 77
  authority, 163
  critics, 59, 60, 90, 91, 96, 99, 105, 109, 110
  democracy, 138
  Jews, 89
  life, 24, 57, 62, 84
  literary influence, 138, 170, 172, 175
  politics, 111

Digitized by Google

Boehme:
Quakers, 91, 94, 100, 101
science, 80, 81
social reform, 82, 180
spread of interest in, 56, 57, 61, 67, 77, 90, 91, 101, 104, 114
students of, 59, 79, 81, 83, 84, 90, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 134, 170, 177, 178
style, 60, 93, 94, 95
teachings, 82, 100, 133, 140, 144, 176, 178, 179
works, 56, 58, 60, 77, 79, 81, 88, 103, 108, 109, 135
Boehmenists, 12, 67, 92, 93, 94, 96, 98, 99, 100, 102*, 104, 107
Bonaventura, 3
Boreel, Adam, 68, 89, 120
Boyle, Robert, 22, 65, 71, 72, 73, 74, 120, 121, 122
Braithwaite, 100*
Brewster, Sir David, 80
Brice, Edmund, 106
Bromeley, 106
Browne, Robert, 38
Browne, Sir Thomas, 76
Brownists, 38, 41
Brunnquell, Ludwig, 107
Bruno, Giordano, 22
Bunyan, 43, 54
Burroughs, 40
Byrom, John, 175

Cabalistic. See *Kabalah*
Calvinism, 18, 34, 35, 36
Camm, John, 101
Campanella, 22, 71, 72
Carlyle, Thomas, 175
Carriere, 9*, 24*, 91
Casaubon, Meric, 90
Catholicism, 34, 35, 39, 48, 98
Cheyne, 108, 109*
Christ, 12, 15, 19, 21, 38, 40, 112, 142, 143, 158, 159, 160, 162
Christianity, 2, 23, 72, 73, 139, 175, 176
Church, 3, 7, 14, 18, 24, 29, 33, 34, 37, 38, 39, 41, 47, 66, 82, 123
English, 32, 35, 48, 49, 97
Lutheran, 13, 18, 19, 33, 34
and state, 31, 33, 36, 37, 38, 40, 127, 166, 174
Civil War, 35, 52, 54, 69, 74, 128
Cloud of Unknowing, the, 4
Colberg, 15, 84*
Coleridge, 170, 175
College, Invisible, 76, 89, 122
Collegiants, 68, 89
Comenius, 18, 21, 22, 62, 64, 69, 70, 71, 75, 82, 86*, 88, 121, 122
Confessio Fraternitatis, 16, 17
Congregational Way, 38, 39, 40, 41, 128
Conway, Lady Anne, 92
Coppe, Abiezer, 96
Cressy, Father Serenus, 48
Crisp, Stephen, 102
Croese, 107, 179
Cromwell, 19, 39, 46, 53, 54, 64, 89, 110, 111, 112, 127, 133, 138
Cults, Oriental, 2

Dell, William, 46, 110
Democracy, 36, 39, 103, 111
Dennis, John, 171, 172, 179
Descartes, 62, 167
Denck, Hans, 45
Diggers, 40, 113
Dionysius, 3, 4, 6, 13, 45, 46, 49
Dury, John, 22, 47, 65-69, 82, 88, 89, 96, 120, 121, 122, 126

Eccles, F., 101
Eckhart, 4, 5, 31
Ecstasy, 2, 15, 25
Edwards, Thomas, 55
Ellistone, John, 56
Ellwood, Thomas, 99, 134
Emotions, 138, 170, 171, 173
Ennemoser, 96
Enthusiasm, 41, 52, 55, 57, 96, 100, 108, 112, 128

Digitized by Google

Episcopacy, 40, 46
Erasmus, 32
Erigena, John Scotus, 3, 13
Eusebius, 86*
Everard, John, 44, 45, 47, 49, 50
Evil, 29, 43, 100, 114, 124, 140, 141, 148, 150

Faith, 2, 7, 13, 14, 25, 33
Fama Fraternitatis, 16, 17, 20, 71, 78
Familists, 41, 44, 45, 55, 67, 94, 97, 100
Felgenhauer, Paul, 83, 89, 98
Ferrar, Nicolas, 48, 49
Ficinus, Marsilius, 7, 18, 51
Fludd, Robert, 21, 30, 50
Fouqué, 175
Fox, George, 62, 100, 101, 103, 111, 112
Francis, Saint, 45
Franck, Sebastian, 5, 12, 13, 25, 30, 46
Frankenberg, Abraham von, 77, 84, 85*, 88, 89
Freedom, 12, 13, 16, 19, 28, 29, 33, 34, 35, 37, 39, 40, 46, 54, 94, 108, 113, 119, 127, 128, 164. See *Toleration*
Free-will, 82, 123, 149
Freher, 108, 109
Fretwell, Ralph, 102
Friends of God, 103, 105
Friends, 102, 104. See *Quakers*
Fuller, 37*, 42

Galileo, 117
Genius, 178-181
George, David, 41, 97
Gibson, Edmund, 37*
Gibson, William, 102*
Giffthey, 90
God, 13, 26, 27, 29, 43, 59, 114, 141-145. See *Christ, Holy Spirit, Trinity*
Goethe, 175, 179
Gooch, G. P., 40*
Good and Evil, 27, 28, 85, 161
Goodwin, 40
Gott, Samuel, 113
Gravius, Theodoricus, 79
Grotius, Hugo, 22, 117, 118, 139
Guhrauer, 22

Haak, 22, 64, 121, 122
Hamann, 181
Harless, Adolph von, 30
Hartlib, Samuel, 22, 65-77, 83, 86, 87, 88, 90, 119-125, 134
Hegel, 175
Helmont, J. B., 11, 22, 30, 92
Helmont, Mercurius, 11, 92
Helvetius, 88, 89
Herder, 181
Hermes, 7, 51, 61, 62
Hilton, Walter, 4
Holstein, Lucas, 117
Holy Spirit, 15, 38, 59, 60, 68, 86*, 105, 106, 130, 131, 134, 139, 144-146, 156, 166
Hotham, Charles, 47, 60, 61, 92
Hotham, Durant, 47, 60-63
Hotham, Sir John, 47, 101
Hotham, Justice, 100, 101
Howgil, Francis, 101
Huggins, Sir William, 79*
Humanism, 19, 31, 32, 33, 64, 70, 71, 81, 103, 137, 181
Hylkema, 89*

Imagination, 129, 137, 144, 152, 153, 154, 171, 172, 173, 178
Independents, 38, 40, 46, 47, 52-55, 63, 67, 95, 98, 103, 111, 113, 127, 132, 136
Inner Light, 2, 12, 13, 14, 15, 18, 26, 34, 43, 46, 47, 51, 52, 55, 59, 68, 76, 84, 97, 100, 110, 112, 114, 131, 132, 138, 146, 161, 166, 167, 180
Inspiration, 2, 15, 41, 52, 70, 96, 129
Ironsides, 83

Jessop, Edmund, 42, 43
Johnson, Francis, 38

Digitized by Google

Jones, R. M., 37
Jones, Richard, 65
Julian of Norwich, 4, 32
Jung-Stelling, 175
Jungius, Joachim, 22

Kabalah, 8, 11, 13, 29, 92, 93, 96
Karlstadt, 14
Keller, Ludwig, 19
Kelpius, Johann, 107
à Kempis, Thomas, 5, 11, 13, 31, 46, 50, 84
Kepler, Johann, 22
Klopstock, 152*, 180
Knowledge, 6, 7, 13, 23, 69, 70, 162
Knox, John, 36
Körner, 177

Laud, Archbishop, 39
Lavater, 81
Law, William, 79, 80, 81, 108, 109, 175
Lead, Jane, 106, 108
Lee, Francis, 108
Leibnitz, 18, 22
Levellers, 40
Liebert, 123
Lloyd, Morgan, 111
Lloyd, Lodowick, 56
Lully, 10, 63
Luther, 11, 12, 16, 25, 31, 32, 33

Magic, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 17, 52, 83, 86*, 96
Marianus, Angelus, 84
Masson, 19, 117*
Mede, Joseph, 83, 120
Medici, 7, 18
Melancholy, 118, 177, 178
Menasseh ben Israel, 89
Meth, Ezekiel, 98
Methodists, 110
Millennium, 15, 83, 174
Milton, 53, 55, 61, 89, 112, 115 ff.
  academy, 65, 117
  Areopagitica, 119, 123, 124
  authority, 131, 163
  classicism, 137
Milton:
  Commonwealth, 126, 138, 177
  on education, 116, 119
  heterodox views, 132
  independency, 123
  inspiration, 128, 138
  interest in Boehme, 161
  predestination, 119
  romanticism, 137, 170, 171, 173, 175
  state church, 123, 125
Mirandola, Pico de, 8, 9
More, Henry, 49, 51, 60, 71, 91, 93, 175, 178
More, Sir Thomas, 32, 113
Muggleton, Lodowick, 99
Münzer, 14
Murray, Sir Robert, 79
Mylius, Hermann, 122
Mysticism, 1-6, 11, 16, 24, 31, 32, 34, 45, 49, 63, 70, 83, 84, 94, 96, 114, 127, 172, 173
Mystics, 1, 3, 4, 5, 13, 23, 26, 32, 34, 35, 37, 43, 44, 48, 49, 97, 98, 105, 106, 173, 176
Mythology, 176

Neoplatonism, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, 18, 24, 48, 49, 50, 51, 55, 63, 84, 91, 92, 93, 114
Newton, Sir Isaac, 79, 80
Nicholas, Henry, 41
Nova Solyma, 113
Novalis, 175, 177, 178

Oldenburg, Heinrich, 65, 121, 122
Opel, 17, 98*, 152*
Opitz, 22
Origenes, 45
Oxenstierna, 22, 70

Pagit, Dr., 134
Pagitt, Ephraim, 55
Pauli, 115*
Patricius, Franciscus, 71
Paracelsus, 10, 11, 13, 25, 30, 50, 51, 77, 78, 84, 92, 97
Pegnitz Society, 20

Digitized by Google

Pell, 62, 121, 122, 126
Penney, Norman, 100
Pennington, Isaac, 134
Pepys, Samuel, 79
Peters, Hugh, 110
Philadelphists, 105, 107, 108, 109*, 133
Philosopher's Stone, 10, 11, 16, 30, 50, 63, 76, 77*
Philosophy, 2, 3, 4, 13, 16, 20, 22, 117
Pietists, 107, 110, 175
Pilgrim Fathers, 37
Plato, 7, 45, 49, 61, 62, 63, 71, 92
Plotinus, 2, 3, 6, 7, 19, 25, 45, 49, 61, 64, 92
Poleman, Joachim, 73, 74, 76, 87
Pordage, John, 95, 106
Porphyry, 6
Prayer, 25, 130, 167
Predestination, 132, 169
Presbyterians, 39, 115, 123, 124, 125
Proclus, 3, 45, 49
Prophecy, 2, 52, 83, 177
Protestantism, 19, 48, 64
Pufendorf, 22
Puritanism, 4, 40, 108, 115
Puritans, 36, 37, 38, 67
Pythagoras, 61, 62

Quakers, 40, 47, 57, 90-92, 94, 96, 98, 99, 101, 103, 104, 111-113, 127, 133, 176. See *Friends*
Quietists, 45, 49, 133

Ranters, 94
Reformation, 12, 16, 20, 23, 31, 32, 39, 52, 53, 68, 70, 71, 74, 76, 82, 113, 123, 171
  counter, 19, 35
  in England, 31, 35, 36, 38, 82
  in Germany, 15, 25, 34, 40
Regeneration, 16, 25, 26, 41, 111
Renaissance, 7, 18, 137
Reuchlin, Johann, 8
Richard of St. Victor, 3
Ritschl, 58
Roach, Richard, 106*
Robinson, John, 38, 39
Rogers, John, 42
Rolle, Richard, 3, 32, 48
Romanticism, chapter VI
Rosicrucians, 2, 16, 18, 21, 22, 50, 78, 81, 98, 99, 107
Rous, Francis, 45
Royal Society, 64, 76, 79, 80, 107, 122
Rutherford, Samuel, 46*
Ruysbroeck, 5, 48

Sachse, 107*, 108*
Sacraments, 14, 29, 103, 167
Saints, 53, 54, 83
Saltmarsh, 47, 110
Schelling, 175
Schenkendorf, 177
Schlegels, The, 175
Schleiermacher, 162
Schneider, 17*
Scholasticism, 23
Schopenhauer, 175
Schwenkfeld, 5, 12, 13, 25, 30, 67, 84, 97
Scriptures. See *Bible*
Sedgwick, William, 110
Seekers, 89, 94, 97, 100, 101, 112
Selden, 62, 122
Sendivogius, 63
Separatists, 40, 68, 98, 130
Shakspere, 173, 178
Shorthouse, J. H., 49*
Sippell, Theodor, 47*, 100*, 101*, 103*
Sloane MS., 68*, 69*, 73*, 77*, 84*, 85*, 86*, 88*, 89*, 90*
Socrates, 61
Societies, fraternal, 21-23, 63, 64, 69-74, 103, 104, 113
Socinianism, 54, 67
Spanheim, Ezekiel, 22, 117
Sparrow, John, 56, 58, 63
Spenser, Edmund, 4
Sperber, Julius, 98
State. See *Church*.
Stern, 117*, 121*, 126*
Stiefel, Jesaias, 98

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Storm and Stress, 176, 179, 181
Suso, Heinrich, 4, 5, 48

Tauler, 4, 6, 12, 13, 14, 31, 44, 45, 48, 84
Taylor, Edmund, 105
Taylor, Thomas, 101
Theologia Germanica, 5, 13, 31, 44, 45, 49, 91
Theosophical Brotherhood, 133
Theosophy, 52, 92
Thomson, 173
Tieck, 175, 178
Todd, 133*
Toland, 115
Toleration, 21, 23, 35, 43, 67, 108, 112, 128, 131, 132, 134, 164, 167
Travers, Rebecca, 101
Trevisanus, 63
Trinity, 132, 144, 146
Troeltsch, 30, 44, 46, 64, 103*
Truth, 6, 13, 51, 52, 77*, 102, 138
Tryon, Thomas, 108, 109*
Tulloch, John, 51*

Underhill, Evelyn, 3*, 6*, 48*
Underhill, Thomas, 99

Valentinus, Basilius, 10, 77*
Vane, Sir Henry, 111, 126, 134
Vanists, 94
Vaughan, Thomas, 51, 78
Vittel, Christopher, 42

Waite, A. E., 78*
Waldenses, 71, 104
Walthar, Balthazar, 96
Ward, 93*
Webbe, Joseph, 79
Weckherlin, 122, 126
Weigel, 13, 14, 15, 25, 30, 51, 84, 98, 152*
Weigelians, 67, 97
Weingarten, 19*, 40*, 55*, 110*, 127*
Wense, Wilhelm von der, 22
Wesley, John, 110
Will, 7, 26, 141, 145, 146
Williams, Roger, 127, 133
Winstanley, Gerrard, 112, 113
Witchcraft, 10, 52
Wolf, Lucien, 89*
à Wood, 79*, 95*
Wordsworth, 175
Worthington, 72, 73, 78*, 83, 87*, 90*, 93*
Wyclif, 37

Young, 173, 179, 180, 181

Zimmermann, Johann Jakob, 107
Zwingli, 32

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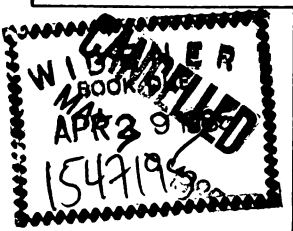

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